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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **CANADIAN ORGANIC FOOD SCENARIO CHANGING AS NEW STANDARDS COME INTO EFFECT THIS MONTH**

### ***New agreement between US and Canada allowing certified organic foods to be sold in both countries is industry triumph***

(Toronto) – Organic Meadow Co-operative Inc., Canada’s first organic dairy company and one of the leading organic brands in the country, today strongly endorsed two major developments in the Canadian organic food sector that stand to benefit consumers and producers alike while contributing long-term to an even healthier organic marketplace.

“It will now be absolutely clear what consumers are purchasing when they buy certified organic dairy products or any organic foods,” said Steve Cavell, CEO, Organic Meadow Inc. “We’re certainly pleased that all the hard work of the sector, in cooperation with government, has clarified national organic standards and confirmed their relevance in real terms that are both transparent and enforceable.”

Last week, US Deputy Agriculture Secretary Kathleen Merrigan signed the US / Canada agreement that reflects not only corresponding positions and clearly defined standards and said “we’re taking the first step toward global harmonization of organics.”

The new Canadian Organic Product Regulations will be a step forward for the organic farmers and people who eat organic food, says Ted Zettel, President of the Organic Federation of Canada, the national organization representing everyone from farmers to retailers in the organic food business, and Chair of the Board, Organic Meadow Inc.

The new law, 20 years in the making, enshrines in regulation the principles of the organic movement, including care for the soil, production of crops using natural methods, composting, crop rotation, grazing for cattle and other farm animals, natural health-care methods and a comprehensive list of other required practices.

It spells out a clear process for certifying not only the farm practices, but virtually every link in the food chain, giving organic enthusiasts assurance that what is labeled as organic is the real thing. Canada’s previous system was voluntary and lacked any effective enforcement ability. The revised Canadian standards coming into force at the end of this month are designed to bring Canadian requirements for organic certification in line with Canadian consumer expectations.

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Steve Cavell continued, “We certainly welcome the new national organic standards and are excited at the prospect of the Province of Ontario also enacting similar standards. We continue to work with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs toward implementation.”

The market for Canadian organic food has been growing at a rate in excess of 20 per cent per year over the last decade. Organic Meadow Inc. has been keeping pace with this trend, and now is much more than just milk with 60 products available at more than 800 grocery and specialty food stores across Canada.

Organic Meadow is a local producer, with more than half of the company’s 100-strong, sustainable Ontario family farms within 100 miles of downtown Toronto. Organic Meadow Inc. is the administration and marketing organization owned by Organic Meadow Co-operative Inc. As a co-op, Organic Meadow shares profits with the farmers who have invested in it -- and lead it -- thereby supporting rural economies in Ontario.

Organic Meadow sustains its strong social mission and actively supports a number of charities including The Stop/Green Barn, Farmers Helpline, a co-op development in Gambia (Africa), the Guelph Family Shelter, Second Harvest and others. Organic Meadow has also funded and helped create organic farmers' co-operatives in Nova Scotia and Manitoba. For more information, visit the Organic Meadow website at [www.organicmeadow.com](http://www.organicmeadow.com)

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