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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ohio Food Policy Council Progress Report Released

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Aug. 13, 2009) – The Ohio Food Policy Council released its progress report, “Bringing Everyone to the Table,” which includes recommendations and details on how the state is maximizing the health, environmental, and economic benefits of Ohio’s \$98 billion food and agriculture industry.

“On the second anniversary of the Ohio Food Policy Council, I am proud to acknowledge this group for their progress in planning and recommending best practices for our state’s food and agriculture industry,” said Governor Strickland. “This council is doing its part to help support local producers and communities, create jobs, and provide nutritious food to Ohioans.”

The council set 15 final recommendations and eight overarching goals to help improve the local food system in Ohio and advance access to healthy food for all Ohioans. They include:

Implement a mobile poultry processing unit in the state.

Incorporate the Farm Bill Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program in Ohio elementary schools.

Create a directory of existing low or no interest loans, grants, and tax incentive programs available for agricultural businesses focused on local food systems.

Increase support of agricultural economic development in the state.

Direct resources toward improving the Ohio MarketMaker program to encourage more producer participation that will facilitate local food business development.

The Ohio Food Policy Advisory Council, created by Governor Ted Strickland in August 2007, is charged with analyzing food production, processing, and consumption in Ohio; linking producers and consumers in local food systems; and ensuring that citizens in need have greater access to fresh and nutritious food. The council also assists local farmers and businesses to effectively market their products.

The council is a public and private partnership chaired by Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Robert Boggs. Its membership is composed of representatives from government, the food and agriculture industry, and individuals from various regions of the state.

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