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HOMEGROWN BY HEROES, OHIO PROUD TO PROMOTE VETERAN FARMERS

National certification program to partner with state marketing program

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Nov. 11, 2014) – State officials today announced a new partnership between the state’s Ohio Proud marketing program and Homegrown by Heroes, a program that certifies agricultural products from farmers, ranchers, and fishermen who have served or are still serving in any branch of the U.S. military.

“I’m proud to sign this agreement today to help promote the Homegrown by Heroes program alongside our successful Ohio Proud program. These farmers have given much to defend our country and now we are working to give something back to them. This new partnership will allow us to help support veterans by purchasing their farm products in the same way the Ohio Proud program allows us to support other local producers,” said Ohio Agriculture Director David T. Daniels.



Ohio Proud is the state’s signature marketing program aimed at helping consumers identify agricultural products that are at least 50 percent made, grown or processed in Ohio. There are currently 473 Ohio Proud partners located across 78 counties, and that number continues to grow. Homegrown by Heroes, started by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and launched nationally by the Farmer Veteran Coalition last year, is a similar marketing program that allows farmer veteran’s to affix a distinctive label on their agricultural products. The Farmer Veteran Coalition has already certified 10 farmers in Ohio under the program and participation is expected to grow significantly with the signing of today’s agreement.



“I’m pleased to help bring this program to Ohio. Veterans Day is a time for us to honor those who have served and those who are serving and to thank them for that service. Homegrown by Heroes allows Ohioans to continue to offer that thanks to servicemen and women throughout the year by supporting the purchase of farmer veteran agricultural products,” said Maj. Gen. Deborah A. Ashenurst, Ohio Adjutant General.

“Agriculture is one of the major industries in Ohio, and generations of Ohioans have left the farm, served honorably in our Armed Forces, and then returned home to take up this work that all of us depend on,” Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tim Gorrell said. “There’s no more appropriate time than Veterans Day to launch this program for all of Ohio to recognize the contributions of our veteran farmers.”

The Farmer Veteran Coalition, based in Davis, California, helps veterans develop careers in agriculture through collaborations of the agricultural and military communities. To qualify to use the Homegrown

By Heroes label, one must have served honorably or still be serving in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, and be at least 50 percent owner and/or operator of the farm business. Veterans of all eras are encouraged to apply by visiting www.hgbh.org or emailing HBH@farmvetco.org.