

> CleanFARMS recognized for environmental excellence

July 31, 2013, Toronto, ON – Canada's leading agricultural stewardship organization, CleanFARMS, has been awarded the 2012 Ontario Minister's Award for Environmental Excellence.

This award recognizes outstanding achievement, leadership and innovation in environmental protection. CleanFARMS won the award for the non-governmental organization category.

"We are thrilled that CleanFARMS has been recognized for its contributions to protecting Ontario's environment. We share this honour with our members, Ontario farmers, agricultural retailers and the many stakeholders who all play a role in making our programs so successful," says Barry Friesen, general manager of CleanFARMS.

The plant science industry broke new ground when the empty pesticide container program, now one of Canada's longest running voluntary stewardship programs, was launched in 1989. The industry's commitment to end of life management of its products grew with the creation of the obsolete pesticide collection program and empty pesticide bag program in 1998 and 2006 respectively. This year, the empty pesticide container program was expanded to include fertilizer jugs and pails.

"Ontario farmers are committed to the stewardship of their land. By using these programs, we are conserving landfill space, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy use and lowering pollutant emissions," says Don McCabe, president of the Soil Conservation Council of Canada. "The strong farmer participation in these programs is credit to everyone involved."

In recent years, the organization has broadened its focus by piloting collection programs for plastic pots, trays, bale and boat wrap, and working with a multi-stakeholder committee to examine how to divert other non-organic agricultural waste streams from Ontario landfills. This work was partially funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food through the Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.

For more information on CleanFARMS' work in Ontario, please visit www.cleanfarms.ca.

For more information about the award, please visit <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/about/EnvironmentalExcellence/>.

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