

*For immediate release*

**British Columbia and Quebec share Canada’s Outstanding Young Farmers honours for 2008**

**Ancaster, ON [November 26, 2008]** – Production excellence and an open farm door policy are driving principles shared by the latest two farm families to join the ranks of Canada’s Outstanding Young Farmers. Dairy farmers David and Lisa Taylor of Vancouver Island, BC and hog producers Lyne Groleau and Marco Couture of Saint-Remi-de-Tingwick, QC were named Canada’s Outstanding Young Farmers (OYF) for 2008 at the organization’s annual event in Calgary, AB on November 21.

After careers in banking and teaching, David and Lisa Taylor were easily lured back to farming in 1995 to Viewfield Farms Limited, an award-winning purebred Holstein herd they operate together with their growing family of three children. They farm 330 acres and milk a herd of more than 300 cows, and have provincial and national highest production awards.

Agricultural studies first brought Lyne Groleau and Marco Couture together. After off-farm agricultural work stints, they took over Lyne’s family’s swine farm in 1992 to form Porcherie Marigro Inc. – a 180 sow farrow-to-finish operation. From an eight-hectare base, the Quebec couple also operate an on-farm processing facility, La Jambonniere, with the help of their five daughters.

“To grow each of their enterprises, this year’s OYF winners began with a priority of maximizing herd productivity, and from there the opportunities are endless,” says Sylvain Gascon, president of OYF. “The Taylors and Groleau/Coutures have also both made the important decision to use their operations to help others understand about agriculture – school children and rural visitors alike – an activity that may well be as vital to the future of agriculture as the products they produce.”

David Taylor loved animal agriculture from an early age on the family farm and through 4-H. When his family operation downsized in the mid 80s he took the opportunity to get a degree in business administration. It was at university he met his wife Lisa, and for three years after graduation, David was a banker and Lisa a teacher. In 1995, David – together with his father and brother – bought a Vancouver Island dairy farm. Over the years, David’s breeding program and use of embryo transfer upgraded the once unregistered herd to 97 per cent purebred. In 2006, the Taylor’s herd achieved the highest award for milk quality on the island. The farm is fully certified in the Canadian Quality Milk program, and David is active on the Island’s Holstein club, BC Dairy Foundation and Vancouver Island Milk Producers. Lisa continues to teach, and organizes school tours of the farm. And the Taylors found another way to share their property, with a 20-acre private campground where they host picnics, reunions and weddings.

Lyne Groleau grew up on a family dairy and hog operation – a farm where she and her husband Marco Couture now operate their hog farm and processing plant. After they both graduated from farm management and technology at Victoriaville College in Quebec, Lyn went back to the home dairy farm and Marc worked as a dairy and crop consultant. In 1992 they took over the pork side of her family’s farm. They quickly began selling their hogs to small processors, and soon saw the opportunities of selling direct to consumers. While all business decisions are made jointly, they split responsibilities with Lyne managing production and Marc the processing. In the last 15 years, they have made tremendous gains in the number of weaned pigs per sow – from 17.9 in 1993 to 27.4 in 2008. Manure-spreading agreements with neighbours ensure proper manual disposal from the couples small land base farm. On-farm processing facilities were built in 2004 to help lower the farm’s vulnerability to price fluctuations. That same year, the farm opened its doors to students, co-op studies and urban visitors to increase public awareness and promote their local product. Lyne, Marco and their family lead busy lives in their community. And they are leaving the doors of their operation open to their daughters if any decide to follow their lead.

In addition to this year’s winners, these five 2008 honourees were also part of the national event in Calgary. They are Wayne and Nicole Oulton, Windsor, NS, mixed livestock and apple producers; Chris and Christy Hiemstra, Aylmer, ON, bee producers; Major Jay and Angela Fox, Eddystone, MB, commercial cow/calf producers; Kris and Rhonda Mayerle, Tisdale, SK, grain and certified seed producers; and Duane and Christie Movald, Breton, AB, purebred Simmental breeders.

Completing its 29h year, Canada’s Outstanding Young Farmers’ program is an annual competition to recognize farmers that exemplify excellence in their profession and promote the tremendous contribution of agriculture. Open to participants 18 to 39 years of age, making the majority of income from on-farm sources, participants are selected from seven regions across Canada, with two national winners chosen each year. The program is sponsored nationally by CIBC, John Deere, Bayer CropScience and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and supported nationally by AdFarm and the Canadian Farm Business Management Council.

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**For more information or a photo of the Taylors or Groleau/Coutures, contact**:

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