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Media Release

Additional Funds for Farm Environmental Improvements in the Greenbelt

For Immediate Release

November 18, 2009

Guelph, Ontario. Additional cost-share funding for on-farm environmental improvements is available to farmers in the Greenbelt through a program announced by the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation.

The Greenbelt Green Energy Program for Agriculture (GGEPA) will provide cost-share funding for farmers to implement best management practices that involve energy conservation and green energy generation. A total of \$250,000 has been committed by Friends of the Greenbelt for 2010.

“We know that many farmers are committed stewards of the land,” said Shelly Petrie, Program Director of the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation. “Funding for green energy improvements will help some growers and producers take that commitment even further. The Foundation is proud to support such a successful and practical program.”

“We are pleased there are additional dollars available for farmers in the Greenbelt who have approved green energy projects on-farm”, says Murray Cochrane, President of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA). “Ontario’s farmers are committed leaders in environmental stewardship and we appreciate this show of support from the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation.”

The funding will be made available to farmers who have projects that have been approved as part of the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP). Both EFP and COFSP are funded through Growing Forward, supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs under the Best Practices suite. These programs are administered by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) acting on behalf of the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition. In turn, the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association is contracted by OFA to deliver the programs to agricultural producers.

In order to qualify for funding, eligible farm businesses within the Greenbelt must have a peer-reviewed third edition EFP, be approved for cost-share dollars under program year two (2010) of COFSP and have selected one or more best management practices (BMP) from the GGEPA list.

Four specific BMP categories from COFSP are eligible for cost-share funding under this new initiative: renewable energy production for agricultural purposes (#27), energy conservation measures for agricultural purposes (#26), farm energy audits (#25), and livestock nutrition planning to reduce greenhouse gases (#22). There is no additional application form for this program.

For more specific details, farmers are encouraged to contact their local OSCIA Program Representative or visit www.ontariosoilcrop.org.

The OSCIA is a not-for-profit farm organization dedicated to working with farmers to communicate and facilitate responsible, economic management of soil, water, air and crops through producer education, local association development, program delivery and consumer outreach.

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For more information, contact:

Andrew Graham, Program Manager, OSCIA, 1-800-265-9751, agraham@ontariosoilcrop.org or

Jennifer Story, Communications Manager, Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation, 647-966-6310, jstory@greenbelt.ca