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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Free Organic Valley/PCO Member Meeting Focuses on**

**Animal Health, Organic Standards**

Please join Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative and Pennsylvania Certified Organic for the first in a series of 2015 regional member meetings. On Thursday February 12th CROPP/OV staff and PCO representatives will host an educational event at Folk Meeting House, 1711 Springs Rd (Route 669) in Springs, PA. Social time will begin at 9am and the meeting will start at 9:30am. OV/CROPP members, PCO members, and the other interested parties are welcome. The event includes lunch and snacks and ends at 2:30pm.

Organic Valley and PCO developed the regional meetings to bring current and potential members together to provide a forum for engaging in production and policy discussions, learning new practices, and networking with members, Organic Valley, and PCO staff.

“The regional meeting concept was designed to engage our members in a broad conversation,” says PCO’s Director of Education and Outreach Lee Rinehart. “It is an opportunity to learn from expert organic practitioners, get to know other members, and learn important organic policies and any changes that are taking place in the certification environment.”

Peter Miller & Solomon Meyer from Organic Valley/CROPP will discuss information about the cooperative and organic crop & dairy market opportunities, and CROPP Staff Veterinarian Paul Dettloff, DVM will discuss dairy herd health management. Dr. Paul will cover herd health tools for an organic dairy and what is needed for organic transitioning dairy herd, as well as any questions attendees may have.

Lee Rinehart, along with members of the PCO Certification Team and Standards Committee, will talk about certification, standards, and policies that are important to organic producers. Don Brubaker of the Fertrell Company and Jonathan Zeiset of Zeiset Ag Consulting & Sales will discuss their product lines and services.

Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative is a farmer-owned mission-driven cooperative, promoting regional farm diversity and economic stability by the means of organic agricultural methods and the sale of certified organic products. PCO is a USDA-accredited organic certifying agency that educates and certifies growers, processors, and handlers of organic crops, livestock, and livestock products in Pennsylvania and adjoining states.

For more information on the free joint membership meeting please contact OV/CROPP on the Farmer Hotline at 888-809-9297 or Lee Rinehart at PCO at 814-470-9734. The next round of OV/PCO Regional Membership Meetings will be held in Lancaster and Juniata Counties on March 23 and 24, with information forthcoming.

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