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MEDIA RELEASE

July 09 2006

Experts to Help Farmers Improve Profitability and Reduce Greenhouse Gases

'Leading World and Australian experts will be speaking at Australia's largest organic event' Andre Leu, Chair of the Organic Federation of Australia stated.

Dr Maarten Stapper a Principal Research Scientist at CSIRO-Plant Industries will show farmers how to improve the profitability of their operations by harnessing natural soil processes.

According to Dr Stapper a healthy soil leads to better crops and pastures requiring less inputs for similar productivity, resulting in healthy animals and improved food quality for healthy humans.

In the process soil organic carbon can be doubled which also helps society by slowing climate change.

Dr Elaine Ingham, one of the worlds leading soil microbiologists will show how composting can sequester carbon into the soil and help reverse the greenhouse gases created by our society.

Dr Jan Skjemstad, a Senior Research Scientist, CSIRO-Land & Water, Adelaide will talk on the varied mechanisms which protect soil organic matter from decomposition into CO₂.

'Published peer review scientific studies in North America and Europe show that organic agriculture, not only emits less greenhouse gases than conventional agriculture, the carbon sequestration from increasing soil organic matter leads to a net reduction in greenhouse gases.' Andre said.

'Further studies show that organic farming systems are more resilient to the predicted weather extremes. These organic agricultural systems are examples of how we can start to reverse climate change and have excellent production and economic results.'

'Climate change is one of the major issues affecting all of us on our planet. Experts expect that climate change will have an adverse effect on our food supply due to more frequent extreme weather events leading to increasing crop failures. The security of our food supply concerns all of us.' Mr Leu stated.

In order to increase the knowledge and debate around the benefits of organic agriculture to reduce greenhouse gases, the topic has been selected as the theme of the **Third National Organic Conference, to be hosted by the OFA at Darling Harbour, Sydney, Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd July 2006**

Held in conjunction with the **Organic Expo** to create Australia's largest organic event, the conference will be a great opportunity to see the full range of organic products and learn more about the worlds fastest growing food industry.

Andre Leu, Chair Organic Federation of Australia

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