

## **Coastal provinces home to Canada's 2011 Outstanding Young Farmers**

**Ancaster, ON [November 21, 2011]** – Nova Scotian dairy farmers and British Columbian organic produce farmers are Canada's 2011 Outstanding Young Farmers (OYF). Geoff and Jennifer Bishop of Round Hill, Nova Scotia and Kevin and Annamarie Klippenstein of Cawston, British Columbia were chosen at the OYF annual national event held recently in Brandon, Manitoba.

The Bishops and Klippensteins were chosen from the seven 2011 regional finalists – who along with the winners included – René Gagné and Pascale Chabot, St-Elzéar-de-Beauce, QC, dairy producers; Wes and Briar Wiens, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, grapevine propagation; Andrew and Tanis DeRuyck, Pilot Mound, MB, grain production; Franck and Kari Groeneweg, Edgeley, SK, grain production; and Matt and Tara Sawyer, Acme, AB, grain and beef production.

“This year's OYF winners demonstrate the tremendous diversity that makes up the Canadian agriculture industry,” says Brian Newcombe, OYF president. “The Bishops and Klippensteins represent the refreshing evolving landscape of farming – next generation farmers steeped in rural family tradition to young farmers who bring experience from other industries home to their new operation. It takes a country full of innovative entrepreneurs to help feed our growing population and contribute to the vital industry that OYF so proudly promotes and recognizes.”

Geoff and Jennifer own Bishop Farms Ltd., a 160-cow dairy operation located on the farm his grandfather purchased in 1969 when he emigrated from England. After meeting at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, and Geoff's work travels to dairy farms in New Zealand and England, the Bishops came home to farm with Geoff's parents in 1997.

A new dairy barn and milking facility were built to accommodate their growing herd of registered Holstein cattle. An eye on energy conservation led to a fabric structure barn with natural lighting and ventilation, and geo-thermally heated floors in the double-ten milking parlour. And herd production has risen to 10,750 litres/cow with butterfat increased to 4.25%. The Bishop's land base has kept pace, and their 750 acres includes a woodlot and pheasant preserve. Large machinery is mostly cost shared with other farmers, and the newest on-farm innovation is a soybean extruder that provides meal for the cows and oil that is sold to a feed company for a new revenue stream.

Geoff is active on his local milk committee and Holstein Club, and Jennifer volunteers her time in church and children's activities. Geoff and Jennifer – majority share holders in the farm operation – are grateful for the support they received from Geoff's parents, who are still active in the farm. The Bishops hope their four young children, aged 3-10, will have the same passion for agriculture and stewardship of the land as their parents.

Kevin and Annamarie Klippenstein fell instantly in love with the five-acre property in Cawston, British Columbia that became the foundation of Klippers Organic Acres. In 2001, while both working in the hospitality industry, the Klippenstein's knew they wanted to produce certified

organic produce. Annamarie was raised on a farm, and Kevin had no farming background, but that didn't slow them down.

To find a market for their produce that paid well, they began selling direct to consumers at Vancouver-area farmers markets. Based on customer feedback, they expanded their orchard operation to include vegetables and free-range chickens. Production of storage crops such as garlic, squash, onions, carrots and beets has increased off-season sales through Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) boxes. Social media has helped the Klippersteins promote the farm and their products.

Their farm has grown to 40 acres of organic production. Cover crops protect the soil from erosion and build soil structure, and predator bugs provide pest management. Solar panels have been installed on their drying facility and for hot water in the apprentice building – home to their on-farm apprenticeship program that every season teaches 4-10 students the techniques of organic farming.

Kevin is chair of the Organic Farming Institute. They are both very involved with the Vancouver Farmers Markets, their community and the activities of their four children, aged 6-13. Kevin and Annamarie's goals for the future are to continue farming sustainably, educate consumers on food and pass their knowledge to young, aspiring farmers.

Completing its 31<sup>st</sup> 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 Bishops or Klippensteins, contact:**

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