

2011

The FARMER'S PLEDGE ©™

Knowing your farmer is the best assurance that the food you buy is responsibly grown; grown with methods that recognize the inherent implications of the web of life in all our individual actions. **Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY)** believes that farmers should work in harmony with natural forces and leave the little piece of the world over which they have stewardship in better condition than when they found it.

To further enable consumers to identify the farms they want to support with their food dollars, NOFA-NY has established a Farmer's Pledge, separate and distinct from USDA Certified Organic. Farmers and market gardeners who adhere to the following pledge have signed an affidavit which they display for customers and neighbors to view. This pledge is based on the integrity of the farmer/gardener. Those who sign this pledge agree that consumers may inspect, by appointment, their farm/garden to judge the truthfulness of this statement. NOFA-NY does not investigate or make any guarantee that the individual farmer is complying with the Farmer's Pledge.

This pledge arises from the expressed need of growers who have a fundamental disagreement with the usurpation and control of the word "organic" by the USDA, and those farmers who want to pledge to an additional philosophical statement about their growing practices.

WE PLEDGE THAT IN OUR FARMING, PROCESSING, AND MARKETING WE WILL:

- Build and maintain healthy soils by applying farming practices that include rotating crops annually, using compost, cover crops, green manures, and reducing tillage;
- serve the health of soil, people and nature by rejecting the use of synthetic insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and fertilizers;
- reject the use of GMOs, chemically treated seeds, synthetic toxic materials, irradiation, and sewage sludge in our farming, and all synthetic substances in post harvest handling;
- treat livestock humanely by providing pasture for ruminants, access to outdoors and fresh air for all livestock, banning cruel alterations, and using no hormones, GMOs or antibiotics in feed;
- handle raw manure and soil amendments with care;
- support agricultural markets and infrastructures that enable small farms to thrive;
- conserve natural resources including the atmosphere and climate, by reducing erosion and pollution of air, soil and water through responsible farming practices;
- maximize the nutritional value of food and feed by practicing careful post harvest handling;
- practice minimal processing for all food products to preserve the natural nutritional value of food: NO use of irradiation, ultra-pasteurization, excessive heat, synthetic preservatives, or GMO processing agents or additives and include all ingredients on labels;
- ensure food safety by using potable water for washing crops;
- reduce the ecological footprint of farms and homes by limiting energy use and converting to renewable sources of energy;
- reduce food miles by selling produce locally and regionally;
- create beneficial habitat for wildlife and encourage biodiversity;
- help preserve farmland;
- share and develop farming skills and know-how;
- use ethical business practices;
- pay a living wage to all farm workers and acknowledge their freedom of association and their right to collective bargaining;
- treat family members and farm workers with respect, and ensure their safety on the farm;
- work in cooperation with other farmers and with the neighboring community to create a more sustainable way of life;
- encourage the distribution of unsold but edible food to people who need it;
- sustain the land in healthy condition for future generations.



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