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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NFU JOINS OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AT MONTREAL RALLY ON
APRIL 17, INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FARMERS' STRUGGLE**

MONTREAL, Que.—“Farmers around the world are speaking out, and resisting the negative effects that trade agreements, corporate globalization, and neo-liberal policies are having on their farms, their neighbors, and on their rural communities,” Ontario NFU Coordinator Peter Dowling told a crowd assembled in Montreal today.

Dowling was in Montreal to take part in rallies and protests to mark April 17: “International Day of Farmers’ Struggle.” Dowling and hundreds of citizens gathered at the Montreal Stock Exchange and marched to a flour mill owned by agribusiness giant Archer Daniels Midland.

The event was organized to call attention to attacks on peasants’ and farmers’ livelihoods around the world; the expulsion of farmers in Mexico, Latin America, and elsewhere; the corporate takeover of food and the industrialization of farming; the spread of genetically-modified foods and crops; and the need for a more just and democratic food system based on food sovereignty for all people.

The action was organized and supported by the Union Paysanne de Montréal; Food Not Lawns; Biotech Action Montréal; The Convergence des luttes anti-capitalistes; The People's Potato; Comité chrétien pour les droits en Amérique Latine; Comité Libertad (CEGEP Vieux-Montréal); Comité pour la libération des prisonnier-ère-s politiques; Social Justice Committee; Students Taking Action in Chiapas; and Student Network to Stop the FTAA.

Dowling praised those who organized and attended the rally for building solidarity between the people who create our food and all of us who eat it. “Farm issues affect all of us. The structure of the global food system is of vital importance to all Canadians. All Canadians should become more involved in food issues such as genetically-modified foods and the expansion of corporate pork production,” said Dowling.

“GM crops and patented seeds are ways that transnationals extract resources from farmers and consumers alike. By taking control from the seed to the store shelf, these corporations are controlling the food system and everything that goes into our mouths,” said Dowling.

The Vía Campesina has declared April 17th of each year as the “International Day of Farmers’ Struggle” in commemoration of the killing of 19 peasants in Northern state of Para, Brazil, that occurred on April 17th, 1996. Since then, farmers and peasants around the world join together on April 17th to focus the world’s attention on the situation of rural people.

The Vía Campesina is a global farm movement that brings together organizations of peasants, small and medium-sized farmers, rural women, farm workers and indigenous agrarian communities. Currently, 82 farm organizations representing millions of farming families from 47 countries belong to the Vía Campesina.

— 30 —

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