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national farmers union

In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YOUNG CANADIAN FARMERS MARCH STREETS OF CANCUN

Cancun, Mexico - Three young farmers from Canada are among several thousand people attending the International Forum for Social and Environmental Justice that is taking place in conjunction with the United Nations COP16 Conference on Climate Change in Cancun, Mexico. The National Farmers Union (NFU) of Canada sent three delegates to attend the forum which is being held from December 4th to 10th.

Cammie Harbottle, the newly elected Youth President of the NFU was among the group of Canadians on the march. "I'm here representing the members of the NFU and we're marching with other farmers from around the world urging our governments to start looking at real solutions to climate change. Solutions are being offered by the people on the ground, in local communities and developing countries" said Harbottle. "It is the people here, the farmers, the indigenous people that are going to be the most adversely affected by more instability in the climate and a small rise in global temperatures" Harbottle concluded.

"Many proposals for the mitigation of climate change being discussed inside the talks will not reduce our consumption of fossil fuels or lower carbon dioxide levels. These so-called solutions are merely attempts of governments to capitalize on new markets created by the business of climate change" stated NFU member, Kalissa Regier. The alternatives to these proposals are being discussed in a global forum running parallel to the UN meetings. The global forum is comprised of small farmers, indigenous people, women, and youth from around the world and is focused on changing the system, not the climate. "As farmers, we look first for solutions within our food and farming systems, and what can be done by individual farmers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. All three of us here from Canada are farming organically, and we see that as an important step towards creating a food system that is part of the real solution to climate change."

At this point in the COP16 discussions, there has been little progress made on moving ahead with previous accords, leaving people with a distinct memory of Copenhagen in 2009. The NFU is currently working with its members and alliances on a climate change policy for 2011.

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