

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

### **Sustainability and Certification Preserves the**

### **Tradition of Stanley Farms**

**May 3, 2011 – Vidalia, Georgia**

In a period of time where businesses are shutting their doors weekly and terms such as bailout and foreclosure are being used, Stanley Farms continues to flourish and provide a product that is as sweet as it can be. Mr. R.T. Stanley Jr. who runs Stanley Farms alongside his three sons Brian, Tracy and Vince is an icon. He hangs his hat on 50 years of hard work in the Ag Industry starting from a humble 5 acres to now over 1000 acres of sweet onions. It is evident that their work goes beyond simply growing onions, but rather stems from a true passion to provide consumers with a quality product. Stanley Farms has taken steps in the direction of sustainability and certification. Their mission is to live off the land but always give back more than what they take.

“Sustainability is the core of our business” says Brian. “As stewards of the land, conducting ourselves with integrity and an honest work ethic, we strive to improve upon our crops and natural resources in order to provide a yield that will sustain the family business”.

Some of the steps they are taking involve planting pine trees to reduce their carbon footprint, using their ponds as surface water to eliminate the use of deep wells and installing end gun shut offs to conserve the use of water that falls across highways and non farming areas. They also scout the fields to determine spraying and irrigation needs instead of relying on a pre-determined set schedule. They have also converted all of their diesel irrigation engines to electric. By being cognizant of their practices and how it affects non-renewable resources, the Stanleys better ensure the viability of their farm.

Stanley Farms has also committed to fully knowing the flavor profile of their onions. Partnering with National Onion Labs, Inc. (NOL) to certify their onions goes farther than simply receiving a certificate. Stanley Farms must meet rigorous standards to reach certification.

Onion flavor is determined by the interaction of grower management, variety and location. Certification starts at the field level where samples are collected.

Stanley's onions are tested based on what consumers taste; heat, flavor strength, after taste and sweetness. This is done with NOL's Pungency Plus™ program which provides the methodology to reach in and find the flavors that have made Vidalia Onions famous. Measuring and reporting the full consumer taste experience allows for a full flavor profile and NOL utilizes these advanced testing tools to identify and certify onions as Certified Extra Sweet® or Certified Sweet®.

“Our research has found that onions can have almost the same pungency but the levels of off-flavors and after taste can block people’s perception of sweetness” says David Burrell, President of NOL, “At NOL we are proud of Stanley Farms as they are helping demonstrate to all members in the supply chain how to best protect the interests of the consumer, the retailer and the category”.

Since inception in 1998, NOL has tested more than a million onions using an array of public and internally developed tests to identify factors that cause an onion, the world’s third most significant vegetable crop, to provide pleasant or unpleasant consumer experiences.

By making a true commitment to better know their onions, it is obvious that Stanley Farms is going above and beyond to provide a Certified Sweet® onion that consumers are demanding without compromising the ability for future generations to carry on their love for growing sweet onions. As a whole Stanley Farms finds ways to give back to their community, by employing hundreds of workers and providing free health screenings. They even participate in farm awareness day for school children. With advances and improvements surrounding this prized onion, this group of men have raised the bar for other growers to measure up to, not for applause or recognition but because of their forethought of providing opportunities for others to preserve and expand.

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