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## Maryland Farmer Awarded Inaugural 'Farmer of the Foodshed' Award

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Edwin Remsberg

Future Harvest CASA conference at University of Maryland .

LA FARGE, Wis. — Organic Valley, America’s largest cooperative of organic farmers and one of the nation’s leading organic brands, recently announced that one of its Maryland farmer-owners, Ron Holter of Jefferson, received the inaugural Farmer of the Foodshed Award for his organic livestock farming practices at Future Harvest CASA’s 17th Annual Conference.

“Ron Holter of Holterholm Farm is one of the area’s finest farmers and we are proud to award him the first annual Farmer of the Foodshed Award,” said Dena Leibman, executive director of Future Harvest Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture. “Ron’s farming is 100 percent in sync with our mission. He is a stellar educator and takes great care to farm in ways that ensure his farm, and the land and water surrounding it, will be around for generations to come.”

Holter, an organic dairy and livestock farmer, operates and lives on a sixth-generation family farm with his wife and grown children. In 2005, Holterholm Farm converted to organic and became a member of the Organic Valley farmer-owned cooperative. Holterholm Farm sits on 287 acres where 130 Jersey cows and a small, organic, all-pasture Hereford herd of 12 cows graze.

“It’s quite an honor for me and my family to receive this award,” Holter said. “I’ve enjoyed mentoring many young farmers who are just beginning in pastured agriculture and working together with the Maryland Graziers Network and Future Harvest CASA. It’s been important to us to open up our farm up to others who want to see and learn about sustainable and organic agriculture. We need to keep farmers on the land, and honing best practices that will sustain us all in the future.”

Holterholm Farm plays host to 10 to 15 group visits each year, including college classes and public gatherings.

Organic Valley