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AGRICULTURAL JUSTICE PROJECT AND OHIO ECOLOGICAL FOOD AND FARM ASSOCIATION JOIN FORCES TO CERTIFY FOOD JUSTICE STANDARDS

Gainesville, Florida—The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) will be the newest certifier of U.S. farms and businesses for the Agricultural Justice Project's (AJP) Food Justice Certified (FJC) label.

"For 40 years, OEFFA has promoted sustainability in our food system. As we take account of all that we have gained, we also acknowledge the work that still lies ahead. We know that the injustices in our food system are pervasive and deep. We are both committed and honored to begin this partnership with the Agricultural Justice Project to address the inequities which stand in the way of a truly sustainable food and farm system for all," said OEFFA Executive Director Carol Goland.

AJP and OEFFA have signed an official Memo of Understanding and AJP has been working closely with OEFFA's Certification Program over the past several months.

AJP co-founder Elizabeth Henderson was one of OEFFA's keynote speakers at their annual conference in February 2019. The gathering focused on fairness and social justice, demonstrating that OEFFA's work and future path are closely aligned with AJP's mission to work towards a food and agricultural system based on empowerment, justice, and fairness for all who labor from farm to retail.

OEFFA will be working with the existing trained and experienced independent FJC reviewers, inspectors, and worker organizations and they will be certifying all FJC clients in the immediate future. This work will start with a transition of existing FJC clients now and expand to taking on new FJC clients at the start of 2020. In the meantime, AJP's technical assistance program will continue to work with farms and businesses that are preparing to apply for Food Justice Certification.

"It is critical to the integrity of AJP standards and the FJC market claim that the certifiers that AJP works with are also committed to high ethical behavior and to the goals and mission of enhancing social justice for all that labor in agriculture. AJP is proud to welcome OEFFA for these reasons. Now is the time for the U.S. organic marketplace to embrace these critical and missing components of our collective organic vision. It will add critically-needed market differentiation for agroecological producers, processors, and buyers," said AJP Co-Founder and Board Member, Michael Sligh.

"We are fortunate to have found a certifier ally who is so committed in their principles, staff, and governance to social justice being an essential tenet of ecologically healthy agriculture and food systems. We are excited about the possibility to reach new farms and food businesses through this collaboration. We feel confident about the strength of the commitment of OEFFA to social justice, good governance, and quality certification and are very much looking forward to a renewed forward path on which to work towards a fair food system," concluded AJP General Coordinator, Leah Cohen.

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The Agricultural Justice Project (AJP) is a stakeholder-governed and driven non-profit organization that works to transform the existing agricultural system. We seek empowerment, justice and fairness for all who labor from farm to retail. We apply a systemic approach that tackles root causes of injustice to our work in education; outreach; farm and food business technical assistance, trainings, and tools, including our Food Justice Certification program; and in our advocacy and solidarity work. www.agriculturaljusticeproject.org

The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) is a non-profit organization founded in 1979 by farmers, gardeners, and conscientious eaters committed to working together to create and promote a sustainable and healthful food and farming system. For more information, go to www.oeffa.org.

