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Contact: 202-554-1600

WASHINGTON (April 5, 2011) – National Farmers Union (NFU) will offer a new Beginning Farmer Institute to individuals who are contemplating starting a farm operation. The program is also open to those across the nation who have just begun farming or are in the process of transferring an operation from a parent, grandparent, or other relative.

Beginning farmers and ranchers face a seemingly unlimited number of decisions to make, from drawing up a business plan and arranging financing to learning what programs are available to make it easier to start up and sustain a successful operation.

“We are designing this program to answer the questions new farmers have, and more importantly share our expertise to answer questions that people do not always think of asking when they begin farming,” said NFU President Roger Johnson.

Applicants accepted into the 2011 program will attend two separate education sessions, one to be held this summer, the other in September in Washington, D.C. Program topics will cover business planning, understanding USDA programs, tax and record keeping, and marketing.

A $25 registration fee is required for accepted candidates. The National Farmers Union Foundation will cover the costs of materials, transportation, and lodging. This program is supported by Farm Credit and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE).

Applications may be found by visiting www.nfu.org/education , filling out the form and returning it by the April 30, 2011, deadline.

National Farmers Union has been working since 1902 to protect and enhance the economic well-being and quality of life for family farmers, ranchers and rural communities through advocating grassroots-driven policy positions adopted by its membership.

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