

*For immediate release*

### **Murray and Anne Ferguson receive W.R. Motherwell Award**

**Ancaster, ON [April 2, 2013]** – Murray and Anne Ferguson of Ancaster, Ontario were publicly recognized for their honour as 2012 recipients of Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers (OYF) program W.R. Motherwell Award, at an OYF event held recently in Guelph, Ontario.

The award was officially announced last November at the OYF national event in Charlottetown, PEI, and presented in person to the Fergusons at the Ontario regional OYF event held on March 26 in Guelph. Murray and Anne Ferguson were honoured for their long-time support, participation and promotion of the OYF program, and the agriculture industry, with the organization's highest recognition.

Murray and Anne were OYF winners for the then Ontario Great Lakes Region in 1986 when the program was facilitated by the Jaycees. Murray continued to work tirelessly to save the program and help evolve it into the vibrant and respected program it is today. Murray was national OYF president in 1991-1992, and chaired a pivotal 1998 meeting that formalized a new constitution that saw the program become Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers Program, with ownership shifting from the Jaycees to OYF alumni.

“Murray and Anne have given selfishly of their time and talents to promote the excellence in agricultural advancement, opportunity and exchange for the OYF program through their leadership,” say nominators Jim and Marg Glenn, 2010 Motherwell Award winners and OYF alumni.

After meeting at Kemptville College in Ontario, Murray began his agricultural career working for Canada Packers in Toronto. After a few years, they returned to their roots and began dairy farming near Alberton, Ontario. In 1989 they opened a John Deere dealership, and later sold their cows when it there wasn't enough time to work their farm and their equipment dealership. Murray was a founding member of his local Rotary Club and donated tractors and wagons for heritage events in the community. Serving the community was important to both Murray and Anne, and Murray went on to enter politics serving six years as a councillor in Ancaster and five years as a councillor in Hamilton.

The W.R. Motherwell award recognizes outstanding service to an individual or couple dedicated to Canada's OYF program. “Murray and Anne have served the agricultural community in many important ways – beginning with leadership that saw the OYF organization become its own entity,” says OYF President Derek Janzen. “It's an honour for OYF to recognize the Fergusons for a lifetime of dedication and commitment to OYF with the Motherwell award.”

Dr. Motherwell – the namesake of the W.R. Motherwell Award – was born near Perth, Ontario in 1860. His leadership in Canadian agriculture spanned more than 50 years and he is regarded by many as the “grand old man of Canadian agriculture.” His career highlights include minister of agriculture in Saskatchewan's first provincial government, and minister of agriculture for Canada

in the 1920s. Having attending agricultural college in Guelph, Ontario, his move to Saskatchewan resulted in his instrumental role in establishing the agriculture facility at the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. Motherwell died in 1943 at the age of 83.

Celebrating 33 years, Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers' program is an annual competition to recognize farmers that exemplify excellence in their profession and promote the tremendous contribution of agriculture. Open to participants 18 to 39 years of age, making the majority of income from on-farm sources, participants are selected from seven regions across Canada, with two national winners chosen each year. The program is sponsored nationally by CIBC, John Deere, Bayer CropScience and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and supported nationally by AdFarm and the Farm Management Canada.

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**For more information, or a photo of Murray and Anne, contact:**

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