



What is HOPE?

The Horizon Organic Producer Education (HOPE) program was created to help farmers transition to organic, provide organic farmers with information on topics important to their business and support organizations that benefit family farms and the environment.

We provide ongoing education and resources for current and future organic partners to ensure that they remain at the forefront of our industry. Horizon hosts industry experts on topics like organic veterinary care, soil building and pasture management, and best practices for high milk quality at annual producer meetings. We regularly organize regional education sessions, and we proudly support the communities and activities that are important to our family farmers.

In addition, we celebrate and encourage excellence in organic farming through unique programs such as our annual HOPE Award and our HOPE Scholarship program.



The HOPE Award: Celebrating Organic Leaders

Horizon established the HOPE Award to honor one outstanding farm family each year. Families are nominated based on their passion for organic farming and their dedication to spreading the word about organic in their communities. Recipients inspire positive change through their dedication to organic principles, serving as models for conventional, transitioning and organic farmers.

Our 2010 HOPE Award winners, Harvey and Connie Frasier from Mohawk, NY, were honored at Farm Aid in October. “With the HOPE Award, we gratefully acknowledge the Frasier’s spirit and commitment to organic,” said Mike Ferry, Horizon president. “They truly exemplify the power to make a difference in their community by encouraging other family farmers to undertake the transition to organic, and by practicing organic principles that respect and protect our environment.”



The Frasier Family, Mohawk, NY

The HOPE Scholarship: Tending the Future of Organic Farming

When asked, “Why do you farm?” many Horizon farmer partners answer, “It’s a great way to raise my kids and watch them grow up.” Many also hope to offer their kids the chance to take over the family farm and raise their own children with the same values.

To help build the next generation of organic dairy leaders, Horizon created the HOPE Scholarship program in 2006. Open to Horizon producers and their children or grandchildren, the program awards college scholarships to a selected group of recipients each year. HOPE scholarship recipients are chosen by prominent members of the organic and agricultural communities.

Horizon is the first and only national organic dairy brand to have a scholarship program for the next generation of organic dairy leaders.

"With recent reports, including the landmark President's Cancer Panel report, that have made the link between health disorders and the use of conventional pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, growth hormones, and antibiotics, it is important now more than ever to encourage young people to enter the field of organic agriculture. We take pride in the fact that Horizon has led the way in creating a scholarship program to help build the next generation of organic leaders."

— Mike Ferry, Horizon President

2010 HOPE Scholarship Winners



Colton Brodt, of Ferndale, CA, is a four-time recipient of the scholarship. A senior at Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo, he will get his degree in agricultural business with a minor in dairy science. His grandfather, Jim Walker, is the owner of Walker Dairy, which has produced for Horizon since 2006.

"As my college career comes to an end, I find myself looking more at the big picture of organic dairying and the policies that shape the industry. Organic milk consumers need to be continually informed about the benefits of organic milk for their family, themselves, and also their environment. This big picture is something I want to be a part of."



Leanne DeJong, of Bonanza, OR, plans to attend Oregon State University and pursue a degree in agricultural business management. Raised on an organic dairy farm from age nine, she is the daughter of Arie and Jenneke DeJong, Horizon producers since 2004.

"Organic will always be in my field of work because I believe in it and I recognize the vital role that agriculture plays in our society."



Michael Fagundes, of Merced, CA, currently attends California State University, Fresno, majoring in animal science-dairy, and plans to go on to law school after graduation. He is the son of Ralph and Vicki Fagundes, who have been shipping to Horizon since 2002.

"I am preparing for a career in which I can take the action needed to protect and further organic agriculture."



Marjorie Hardy, of Farmington, ME, is working toward a degree in animal science-dairy at the University of Connecticut, and plans to use her education to learn the best ways to prevent illnesses in cows. Her parents, Henry and Teresa Hardy, have been with Horizon since 2003.

"I am very passionate about working with dairy cattle, and I enjoy the shift that our farm made seven years ago to Horizon."