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New England Farmers Union Lauds Member Organization For Leading Groundfish Innovation

SHELburne FALLS, Mass. (July 2, 2009) – The Board of Directors of the New England Farmers Union today sent their congratulations to one of their membership organizations, the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association (CCCHFA), for their work in securing a successful passage of a regional fisheries management plan which builds on a model pioneered by the Hook Fishermen.

“Last week, the hard work of the CCCHFA to develop and implement an innovative tool for managing cod, haddock, flounder, and other groundfish paid off,” said Annie Cheatham, President of New England Farmers Union. “Because of the Hook Fishermen’s innovations, the New England Fishery Management Council adopted a progressive management plan that will help groundfish fishermen increase their profits and will restore depleted fish stocks.”

This management plan, called “sectors,” is based on “catch limits” instead of “days at sea.” It allows fishermen to join one of 19 community-based harvesting cooperatives. “Fisheries are important economic drivers up and down New England’s coast,” Cheatham said. “Fishermen and family farmers have many things in common—global competition, rising costs for fuel and labor, and shrinking resources. They also live among consumers who care passionately about farmers and fishermen, who want to ‘buy local’ and who will go out of their way to support small family run farming and fishing businesses. New England Farmers Union, along with the National Farmers Union, will encourage the National Marine Fisheries Service to adopt this amendment from the regional council.”

New England Farmers Union is a member based organization serving fishermen (wild and farmed), land-based farmers, forest landowners, and committed consumers in all six New England states. Its mission is to support the growth and development of viable farming, forestry and fishing operations, to advocate for progressive policy solutions for New England farm, fishing and forestry industries, and to preserve New England’s capacity to feed and fuel itself. For membership information, visit <http://newenglandfarmersunion.org>