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**Rodale Institute Begins Mission to Fight Global Warming – with Farms
New CEO Tim LaSalle Calls Organic Farming "The Brightest Hope for Our
Planet"**

KUTZTOWN, PA – Timothy J. LaSalle took over as CEO of the Rodale Institute with a mission: to tell the world that a practical solution to global warming already exists. And farmers are standing on it.

Rodale Institute has proved that organic practices, sometimes referred to as regenerative farming, can remove about 7,000 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air each year and sequester it in an acre of farmland. Thus if all 434 million acres of American cropland was converted to organic practices, it would be the equivalent of taking 217 million cars off the road – nearly 88 percent of all cars in the country today and more than a third of all the automobiles in the world.

"The way that we farm may be the single biggest – and most undervalued – way that we can mitigate global warming," said LaSalle, a native Californian and a former agriculture professor at Cal Poly. He added that he came to Rodale Institute, headquartered on a working organic farm in Pennsylvania, because he believes Rodale's 60-plus years of leadership in organics can offer solutions to many of the most serious issues of the day – from nutrition and famine prevention to global warming.

The idea is simple: Soil is a natural carbon storehouse and farming techniques that depend upon petroleum-based practices disrupt this natural process. The ecological impact of these conventional agricultural practices is made worse by greenhouse emissions from fertilizer production and nutrient losses. The result is that U.S. agriculture, using petroleum-based methods, contributes nearly 10 percent of the nation's total greenhouse gas emissions.

Nearly 30 years of research in Rodale Institute's Farming Systems Trial, the nation's oldest side-by-side scientific study of organic and conventional practices, has proved that organic practices, which do not use synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, can be the single biggest way to mitigate global warming.

Paul Hepperly, Ph.D., research director at The Rodale Institute and Fulbright Scholar states, "We've shown that organic practices can do better than anyone thought at sequestering carbon, and could counteract up to 40 percent of global greenhouse gas output." Hepperly, who is helping other nations implement organic farming systems, explains that using soil-building crops and compost to support cash crops helps to build soil carbon levels while keeping productivity in line with conventional systems.

"The world is taking climate change seriously," says LaSalle. "The U.S. presidential candidates are being questioned about their environmental platforms. Major corporations are trying to be green in practice and products. Timing is everything and 21st Century regenerative farming is the brightest hope for our planet to reverse the effects of global warming, and to protect and improve the health of farmers, global citizens and future generations."

Rodale Institute has recently launched a new website, www.hero-farmers.org, where everyone who wants to make a difference can learn how to take practical steps to fight global warming right now by the way they shop, eat, garden and support our nation's farmers.

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