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Leading Harvest Names Kenny Fahey President and CEO

ARLINGTON, VA, October 22, 2021 – Leading Harvest, a U.S. nonprofit advancing sustainable agriculture and food production through its unique universal [Farmland Management Standard](#), announced today that it has named Kenny Fahey as the organization’s first president and CEO.

The unanimous decision by the Board of Directors recognizes Fahey’s deep commitment to advancing sustainable agriculture practices, and his success guiding Leading Harvest as its executive director since the organization launched 18 months ago.

“Kenny has led us through our early months with a strong and sure hand, and the full board is thrilled that he will continue to drive Leading Harvest’s efforts as we build on our successes in the U.S., engage with the supply chain and expand our reach in international markets,” said **Oliver Williams, IV, who chairs Leading Harvest’s Board of Directors and is head of agricultural investments for Hancock Natural Resource Group.**

Fahey, who came to Leading Harvest on loan from The Conservation Fund, where he served as Working Lands Principal, has successfully enrolled more than 1.3 million acres across 29 states in the Farmland Management Standard, and is guiding the organization’s expansion of its footprint internationally with a pilot program in Australia.

Fahey’s engagement with Leading Harvest began at its inception, when The Conservation Fund was asked to convene a group of farmers, investors, NGOs, and farm managers to create a universal third-party certification program for farmland management. Larry Selzer, president and CEO of The Conservation Fund, appointed Fahey to staff the group, and when Leading Harvest launched as its own organization, he was asked by the board to serve as interim executive director.

“This is a bittersweet moment for The Conservation Fund, where Kenny has been a highly respected and valued colleague,” said **Selzer, vice chair of Leading Harvest’s Board of Directors.** “But we know that Leading Harvest -- and the future of agriculture -- will be well-served by this terrific, committed leader in our conservation and sustainability movement.”

Fahey will continue his work engaging a broad stakeholder community seeking alignment with public and private sustainability strategies and initiatives, as well as collaborating with organizations such as the Walton Family Foundation, which provided a generous grant to pilot a Leading Harvest effort with farmers in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

A graduate of Bowdoin College, Fahey holds both MBA and MS degrees from the University of Michigan.

Leading Harvest's Farmland Management Standard is the first scalable, industry-wide solution to urgent issues facing us – from climate change and biodiversity to the resilience of our cropland's soil and community. The rapid adoption of the Standard underscores the enormous global interest in sustainable farmland.

More information on Leading Harvest can be found at www.LeadingHarvest.org.

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About Leading Harvest: Leading Harvest is a nonprofit organization committed to increasing adoption of sustainability practices in agriculture. It was formally organized in 2020 by and for all stakeholders across the agricultural value chain—from farmland owners to companies to communities. The organization provides assurance programs comprised of standards, audit procedures, training and education, and reporting and claim offerings that are optimized for flexibility, scalability, and impact.