

For Immediate Release

Date:	September 14, 2005
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BREADA Creates Louisiana Small Farm Survival Fund

The Baton Rouge Economic and Agricultural Development Alliance (BREADA) announces the establishment of a relief and recovery fund with the Baton Rouge Area Foundation for Louisiana small farm enterprises that have been affected by natural disasters. The fund, named *Louisiana Small Farm Survival Fund*, is a resource for small, family farms, especially when facing unanticipated need and weather related damage.

"In the aftermath of Katrina it is critical to offer gap funding for small, family farms that have experienced major losses to their agricultural businesses. They are often too small to receive grants from the Department of Agriculture and our region must not lose its link to its small, family farms," said Susan Turner, President of the Board of Directors for BREADA.

Traditionally, farmers and small agricultural-related enterprises have been the foundation for our South Louisiana foodshed. The Farmers Markets who support locally grown, seasonal produce provide both an economic base and an important cultural gathering spot, creating a sense of community between urban and rural residents. Unfortunately, many farmers and local Farmers Markets sustained significant damage during Hurricane Katrina.

Over 50% of all farmers that sell their products at area Farmers Markets have structural damage to their farms, including buildings, greenhouses, equipment, crops and livestock, or for some Louisiana fishermen, their fishing boats. Additionally, most small farms have lost critical distribution for their products in the New Orleans and Slidell areas.

Smith's Creamery, an artisan dairy farm in Washington Parish that processes and pasteurizes milk from its own herd, and processes other dairy products at its creamery, has suffered significantly from Hurricane Katrina. Their home parish, including restaurants and grocery stores, has shut down, and many of their normal customers have evacuated. Now, like many small farmers, Smith's Creamery faces the task of balancing the cost of recovery with normal operating expenses while experiencing a 60% drop in income.

Cash relief from Louisiana Small Farm Survival Fund will allow Smith's Creamery and other farmers the opportunity to rebuild and restore their businesses.

For information on how to donate to the Louisiana Small Farm Survival Fund, log onto www.FoundationforRecovery.org.



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