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Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company donation supports establishment of Hurricane Relief Partnership for Carolina Sustainable Farms

OXFORD, N.C. – Nov. 26, 2018 – Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company, Inc. (SFNTC) has donated \$100,000 to the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association for the creation of the Hurricane Relief Partnership for Carolina Sustainable Farms.

SFNTC, a member of the non-profit Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA), said that the new Hurricane Relief Partnership has two key purposes:

- To provide access to low-cost capital and financial planning to between 30 and 50 small sustainable farms in North and South Carolina that suffered damage due to the impact of Hurricanes Florence and Michael; and
- To create an endowment fund to guarantee availability of low-cost financing for small sustainable Carolina farms in the event of future catastrophic weather events.

“The Hurricane Relief Partnership for Carolina Sustainable Farms marks the beginning of a new strategy in building the financial resilience of our region’s sustainable agriculture community,” said Roland McReynolds, CFSA’s executive director.

“The probability of disasters in future years presents a long-term threat to the survival of sustainable family farms serving the markets for local and organic agricultural products in this region. These farms, some of which are SFNTC’s grower partners, are not reliably served by the safety net that exists for large-scale conventional commodity production. Yet the contributions they make to their communities — enhanced soil and water quality, biodiversity, healthy food, economic growth — are vital, and when one of these farms is lost, it has long-lasting negative effects,” McReynolds said.

CFSA will work with the [Natural Capital Investment Fund](#) (NCIFund) to leverage SFNTC’s donation to create up to \$250,000 in low-cost microloans for small, sustainable farms in North and South Carolina affected by the hurricanes. CFSA will also partner with the Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA to support its work to assist farmers in accessing state and federal disaster relief programs, and to provide financial counselling to farmers receiving NCIFund loans under the Hurricane Relief Partnership program.

McReynolds said that CFSA will use funds that are not expended as part of the 2018-19 NCIFund loan guarantee agreement as a guarantee pool for weather-related farm losses beyond 2019. The association will also solicit other contributions to this endowment, with a goal of building a larger guarantee fund to support greater availability of low-cost, low-underwriting microloans for this population of small, sustainable farms in future years.

About the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association is a member-based, farmer-driven 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that helps people in the Carolinas grow and eat local, organic foods by advocating for fair farm and food policies, building the systems family farms need to thrive, and educating communities about local, organic agriculture. Based in Pittsboro, NC, CFSA was founded in 1979, and is the oldest organic farming organization in the Southeast.

About Natural Capital Investment Fund

Natural Capital Investment Fund supports entrepreneurs who are creating jobs and triple-bottom-line businesses in underserved communities in Central Appalachia and the Southeast. NCIFund is a business loan fund with expertise in eco-tourism, agriculture, alternative energy, forest products and community facilities. Founded in 2001, NCIFund is a U.S. Treasury-certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) affiliated with The Conservation Fund.

About the Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA

The Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA mission is to cultivate markets, policies and communities that sustain thriving, socially just, and environmentally sound family farms. RAFI-USA works nationally and internationally, but with a focus on North Carolina and the southeastern United States. RAFI-USA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Pittsboro, NC, and incorporated in 1990.

About Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company

Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company, Inc. is a subsidiary of Reynolds American Inc., which is an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of British American Tobacco p.l.c. Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company manufactures and markets Natural American Spirit tobacco products, including styles made with organic tobacco. For more information, visit www.SFNTC.com

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