



For Immediate Release

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Niman Ranch Offers New Resources to Support Young Farmers, Encourage Sustainable Practices

National Young Farmers Coalition grows its network while helping Niman Ranch farmers succeed

Northglenn, Colo. (April 18, 2019) – This Earth Day, two leaders in the sustainable agriculture movement, Niman Ranch and the National Young Farmers Coalition, will come together to double down on their efforts to bolster their respective young farmer networks. Niman Ranch will be offering free National Young Farmers Coalition membership to its more than 740 family farmers to provide education, mentorship and support to the next generation of sustainable farmers. This announcement comes on the heels of new data released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which showed that while the number of young farmers increased by 2% between 2012 and 2017, the number of farmers over 65 increased by 11%. Niman Ranch farmers average 47 years of age.

“We are thrilled to further bolster our partnership with the National Young Farmers Coalition, an organization that has proven itself to be a tremendous resource to young and beginning farmers across the country,” said Chris Oliviero, Niman Ranch general manager. “Starting out as a young farmer is no simple feat and offering membership to the National Young Farmers Coalition is just one more way we are helping support this next generation.”

The new agreement is mutually beneficial to both networks. Niman Ranch’s farmers now have access to the resources, robust network, and advocacy support the National Young Farmers Coalition offers, while the Coalition is able to grow their network and bring in new voices to support their movement. The Coalition offers regional trainings, guidebooks on federal resources, peer mentoring, advocacy support and discounts on select farm supplies and gear, among other benefits.

“All of us at the National Young Farmers Coalition are thrilled to welcome the Niman Ranch family to our growing network of young farmers,” said Martin Lemos, interim director for the Coalition. “It is appropriate that this announcement is being shared on Earth Day, as our national surveys have found that young farmers are leading the way on sustainable, earth-friendly farming practices. We are excited to learn from our new Niman Ranch member farmers, who have consistently shown leadership in animal welfare and sustainable practices, and to offer our support in lifting up their voices in state and federal farm policy.”

Niman Ranch is committing to covering membership for the next three years for any interested farmers and ranchers within their network, potentially investing up to \$20,000 per year in its young farmers and the National Young Farmers Coalition through this new membership offer. This announcement builds on Niman Ranch's Young Farmer 2.0 plan to grow the next generation of farmers. Ten years ago, Niman Ranch farmers were four years older than the national average. Through a series of initiatives, the Niman Ranch network of more than 740 independent family farmers now average 47 years old and getting younger, more than ten years younger than the national average.

Aaron Williams, 28, an Iowa farmer raising hogs for Niman Ranch, has directly benefited from this Young Farmer 2.0 plan. "I consider myself lucky to be a sixth-generation farmer, but even with the experience growing up on the farm, it hasn't been easy as a young person to run my farm and the business. I'm thankful for the support Niman Ranch has offered to help me as I grow my farm and look forward to meeting more producers through the National Young Farmers Coalition."

Aaron, like the rest of the Niman Ranch network, is committed to responsibly stewarding the land so that he can pass on the farm to his children. Sustainability has always been a key pillar for Niman Ranch, with its farmers and ranchers incorporating many practices to protect the environment including grassy waterways, forest buffers, reduced tillage, crop rotations and more.

Niman Ranch and the National Young Farmers Coalition have been working collaboratively for over two years. In January of 2018, Niman Ranch announced that they raised nearly \$100,000 in support of the Coalition to bolster their shared goal of growing the next generation of sustainable farmers.

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With more than 40 years as an industry leader, Niman Ranch is a community of more than 720 independent family farmers and ranchers who raise livestock traditionally, humanely and sustainably to deliver the finest-tasting meat. All Niman Ranch pork, beef, lamb and prepared products are certified under the Certified Humane® program and available nationwide at both food service and retail locations.

The National Young Farmers Coalition (Young Farmers/the Coalition) is a national advocacy network of young farmers fighting for the future of agriculture. Visit National Young Farmer Coalition on the web at www.youngfarmers.org, and on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram.