



February 9, 2010

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Gills Onions Exemplifies Environmental Leadership by Achieving Climate Registered™ Status

Reporting complete and accurate emissions to The Climate Registry supports emissions management and reduction opportunities

OXNARD, CA – Gills Onions achieved the environmental leadership status of Climate Registered™ by successfully registering its comprehensive greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory according to the rigorous standards of The Climate Registry. Participation in The Registry's voluntary program demonstrates Gills Onions pioneering role within California's Agriculture and Food Processing industries.

Climate Registered is the critical first step in a successful emissions management and reduction strategy. By establishing a clear and consistent inventory of GHG emissions, Gills Onions gains insight into its operations and processes. It also is better prepared for the potential impact of new regulations and risk management strategies.

"We're honored to have our efforts to document our carbon footprint recognized by The Climate Registry and proud of our accomplishments in meeting the rigors of registering our GHG emissions, as well as the results we've already achieved in becoming a more earth-friendly, sustainable grower and processor," said Steve Gill, co-founder of Gills Onions. "We look forward to continuous process improvement in all areas of sustainability and excited about continuing to be more efficient in the use of energy and water, further reducing our waste, and realizing the benefits not only to our bottom line, but also to our employees, customers, and the communities we serve."

Gills Onions is a 26-year old, family owned and operated grower and food processor with the largest fresh onion processing plant in the world. In concert with sister company Rio Farms, the Gill brothers manage over 15,000 acres of farmland and 300,000 square feet of processing and warehouse facilities.

Gills Onions co-founders, David and Steven Gill, have always had a penchant for applying new technologies and methods to growing their business and to maximizing

conservation and efficiency in all areas. As such, Gills Onions is at the forefront of sustainable agriculture and food processing – and earned the 2009 California Governor’s Environmental and Economic Leadership Award (GEELA). GEELA is California’s highest and most prestigious environmental honor.

“In 2008, our total verified Entity-Wide Emissions amounted to 6,894 tons of CO₂ equivalent emissions,” stated Nikki Rodoni, Gills Onions Director of Sustainability. “With this as our benchmark, we anticipate a significant reduction in our carbon footprint for 2009 due to the implementation of many new sustainability measures we undertook this past year.”

In July of 2009, Gills Onions began operating its Advanced Energy Recovery System (AERS) to convert 100% of their daily onion waste – up to 150 tons – into ultra-clean, virtually emissions-free power from two 300 kW fuel cells to provide power for its processing facility.

Currently, they have embarked on a Zero Waste program to further reduce waste and GHG emissions resulting from waste disposal activities in all their operations, and are designing water conservation and recycling systems to reduce and reuse water requirements for processing – that will ultimately reduce further GHG emissions.

Gills Onions’ efforts required strategic partnerships to help achieve their energy, waste, and water reduction goals. Their greenhouse gas inventory was independently verified by Ryerson, Master and Associates, Inc. (RMA), a member of the Lloyds Register group of entities, and a leader in climate change policy, carbon footprinting and greenhouse gas verification. Located in Santa Barbara, California, RMA has been in business since 1994 and has verified over 550 million tons of CO₂.

“We are proud to be associated with Gills Onions and congratulate them on their vision for our planet and our climate. Through projects like their biofuel cell, they are showing the way for all of us who seek to reduce our carbon footprint”, said Dr. Ann Hewitt, Director of Climate Strategies with RMA and Lead Verifier for the Gills Onions inventory.

“Creating an emissions inventory can be complicated and daunting the first time you do it,” according to Nikki Rodoni. “RMA showed a genuine interest in our business, how it operates, and knew just what to look for while suggesting changes to more accurately complete our audit.”

“Having our GHG emissions inventory verified was very helpful,” concluded Steve Gill. “As a result, we took a closer look at our energy expenses, gained a better understanding of our emissions sources and decided how to continue to reduce our emissions inventory.”

Becoming Climate Registered requires the annual calculation, verification and reporting of complete and accurate GHG emissions inventories in a transparent manner for all North American locations. This consistency streamlines reporting and allows for easy data comparison across time and between organizations.

“Organizations that are Climate Registered are the true environmental leaders setting examples for others within their industries and communities. They work ahead of the curve and have voluntarily taken responsibility for reporting their emissions according to

the most rigorous standards available,” said Diane Wittenberg, Executive Director of The Climate Registry “Gills Onions has now joined this powerful community of Climate Registered organizations and has substantive data guiding and supporting its sustainable activities.”

About The Climate Registry

The Climate Registry is a nonprofit collaboration among North American states, provinces, territories and Native Sovereign Nations that sets consistent and transparent standards to calculate, verify and publicly report greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into a single registry. The Registry supports both voluntary and mandatory reporting programs and provides comprehensive, accurate data to reduce GHG emissions. For more information please visit www.theclimateregistry.org.

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