

P R E S S R E L E A S E

GLENISK & THE ORGANIC CENTRE LAUNCH *GROW YOUR OWN ORGANIC GARDEN* 10,000 ORGANIC VEGETABLE SEEDS PACKS TO GIVE AWAY

(Dublin, 19 May 2009) Glenisk, the family owned and operated organic dairy company has joined forces with The Organic Centre, Rossinver, Co Leitrim to encourage Irish people to grow their own organic vegetables this summer. Under the scheme, entitled **Grow Your Own Organic Garden**, Glenisk will give away ten thousand packs of organic vegetable seeds. The packs will be accompanied by expert sowing and growing advice from the Organic Centre, and recipe ideas. Anyone wishing to avail of the free seed packs and growing advice and tips can apply at www.glenisk.com.

The scheme was launched in Dublin by **Trevor Sargent, T.D., Minister of State for Food & Horticulture**. Commenting on the initiative, he said: "This is an important opportunity for people to become involved in growing at least some of their own food and avoid the need for long distance transportation of imported fresh produce. I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of the Glenisk organisation in fostering and encouraging the organic message. The technical expertise and commitment of the Organic Centre must also be applauded."

Vincent Cleary, managing director, Glenisk said: "The recent revival in gardening and allotments makes our Grow Your Own campaign a timely initiative, and we hope that it will encourage people to think about their food and where it comes from. Local and organic are founding principles of our business - in this case, the seeds are organic and you can't get more local than your back garden."

Andy Hallewell, joint manager of The Organic Centre, added: "We want to send a message that with a little help, anyone can grow their own food. For more than 10 years we have developed a public service to help people to grow organically. We offer training, advice and information and constantly develop our training courses and demonstration gardens for the enjoyment and benefit of the public. We are excited about this joint venture with Glenisk and look forward to guiding people young and old through the very special experience of growing your own food."

This year, the organic vegetable seeds available on the scheme are French Beans in many different varieties, all suitable for sowing between May and July outdoors. Popular with organic growers, French Beans are productive and resistant to disease. A high success rate makes them ideal for first time growers and they can be grown just as easily in smaller city gardens or even in containers. The beans, which will be ready for picking from September, are delicious in salads, stews and stir-frys.

As well as receiving the free seeds, participants will get regular updates by email throughout the growing season, with advice, troubleshooting and answers to frequently asked questions from the experts at the Organic Centre. Recipes will also be available to help gardeners enjoy the fruits (vegetables) of their labour. Further information is available at www.glenisk.com.

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For further information, photography or seed samples, please contact:

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Note to Editors:

About Glenisk: Glenisk was established in 1987 by the Cleary family in Killeigh, Co Offaly and converted to organic production in 1995. Today, Glenisk continues to operate from Killeigh and is run by five of the Cleary siblings, producing organic yogurt, milks, butter and goats' milk products. Working with small organic farmers on both sides of the border, Glenisk procures 90% of the organic milk produced in Ireland and with strict adherence to fair trade practices, the Clearys pay farmers the highest milk premium in Ireland. Glenisk has received many awards, including Green Product of the Year at the 2008 Green Awards; Repak Award for Outstanding Practice 2008; Overall Winner, National Organic Awards 2008 and the Making a Difference Award at the 2007 Bord Bia Food & Drink Industry Awards.

About The Organic Centre: The Organic Centre is a non profit organisation set up in 1995, with the aim of providing public education, training and information about organic growing and sustainable living. The Centre is located on a 19 acre site in Rossinver, Co Leitrim and has outreach centres in Clare and Wicklow. The centre runs workshops on organic horticulture, gardening, green building, alternative energy, and artisan food production, and offers a year-long organic horticulture training programme. The centre is a recognised eco-tourism destination with facilities including demonstration gardens & polytunnels; orchard and soft fruit area; café and eco-shop. Projects run by the centre include the **Community Food Project**, which establishes organic community gardens and the Growing Together Project, a cross-border schools programme and cross-community project promoting peace through gardening together.