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As Mad Cow fright spurs interest in sustainable beef, *The Meatrix* opens up new choices for beef consumers

Eat Well Guide lists thousands of stores and farms nationwide offering sustainably raised meat

BETACAM tapes of The Meatrix are available upon request

New York (NY), January 12, 2004 – **The Meatrix**, a humorous 3-minute Flash™ animation that spoofs the *Matrix* trilogy, highlights the problems with corporate agriculture, or factory farming, while providing consumers with viable alternatives. Given the recent fears prompted by the first U.S. case of Mad Cow disease, an increasing number of consumers are making further inquiries about where to find wholesome beef. At the end of *The Meatrix*, consumers can access the **Eat Well Guide**, www.eatwellguide.org, where they can find stores and farms that offer sustainable, organic and grass-fed beef raised on a family farm near them simply by entering their zip code.

Instead of Keanu Reeves, *The Meatrix*, www.themeatrix.com, stars a young pig, Leo, who lives on a pleasant family farm ... he thinks. Leo is approached by a trenchcoat-clad cow, Moopheus, who shows him the ugly truth about agribusiness, complete with a send-up of the “stop-motion” camerawork immortalized by the *Matrix* films.

Created by **Free Range Graphics** (www.freerangegraphics.com) for **GRACE**, the Global Resource Action Center for the Environment (www.gracelinks.org), *The Meatrix* was launched in early November, just two days before the opening of the last installment of *The Matrix* trilogy, and has since been viewed by over 3 million people. This tremendous success has led to the launch of a *Meatrix* merchandise line, including t-shirts, caps and mugs, whose sale proceeds will go to **FARM AID**'s *Saving Family Farms Program* (www.farmaid.org).

“Our aim is to educate consumers as to the reality of where our meat comes from,” says Alice Slater, president of GRACE. “Many people still think that their meat and milk comes from pastures and small family farms, but this is becoming increasingly rare. We are trying to give consumers an alternative choice to purchasing factory farmed meat that is not only healthier for their families but will also support family farms and protect rural communities from devastation. We hope to see increased demand for sustainable meat.”

When farm animals are raised according to sustainable or organic principles, the pre-conditions for spread of animal disease – including mad cow disease – are virtually eliminated. Sustainable beef is raised with more wholesome methods, without routine use of antibiotics, free of hormones, with access to pasture and proper feed, and with regard for animal welfare. Sustainable ranchers do not feed their cattle animal parts and rarely, if ever, slaughter “downer” cows, i.e. cows that are sick or injured – even before the USDA’s belated ban.

- For more information on factory farming and Mad Cow disease, visit: www.factoryfarm.org
- For an introduction to the problems of factory farming, view *The Meatrix* at: www.themeatrix.com
- To find sustainable beef and other meats, search www.eatwellguide.org
- For more information on sustainable meat, visit: www.sustainabletable.org

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