



**A GREENER WORLD**  
Our Food. Our Farms. Our Future. Let's Choose!

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SUSTAINABLE FARMER OUTSTANDING IN THE FIELD**

**--Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW farmer, Ronald Simmons, wins 2018 NC A&T's Small Farmer of the Year award--**

**KENANSVILLE, NC (APRIL 5, 2018)**--Ronald Simmons of Certified Animal Welfare Approved by A Greener World (AGW) Master Blend Family Farms was recently named 2018 Small Farmer of the Year by North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University. Simmons is the second AGW farmer to win the award since 2016, when Donnie and Alease Williams of D&A Farms of Autryville received the same recognition.

Sponsored by Cooperative Extension at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, Small Farms Week is an annual tribute to producers whose farming operations contribute to North Carolina's \$84 billion agricultural industry. The event kicked off on March 26 and culminated with the 2018 awards ceremony held in Greensboro on March 28.

Simmons raises Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW pigs outdoors on pasture at 30-acre [Master Blend Family Farms](#), near Kenansville. Acknowledged by Consumer Reports as the only "highly meaningful" food label for farm animal welfare, outdoor access and sustainability, Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW is an independent, nonprofit farm certification--and one of the nation's Top 5 fastest growing food label claims.

In early 2013, Simmons recognized the growing public concern about food and how it is produced, and decided to certify his farm. By raising his Chester White, Duroc, Yorkshire and Berkshire pigs outdoors on pasture according to the highest animal welfare standards, Simmons is leading the way in meeting consumer demand for verified, high-welfare and sustainable pork products.



Simmons is also passionate about giving back to his community and supports local children in a variety of ways, such as hosting farm visits by groups from FFA and 4-H.

**Ronald Simmons of Master Blend Family Farms says,**

“Receiving this award is another plateau to step on and use to keep moving forward. We’re trying to lead by example, particularly with youth in our community. We want to be living proof that no matter what obstacles life throws at you, anything is possible. Master Blend Family Farms wouldn’t be where we are without the work of our entire team, and we will keep pushing for greater things in all that we do.”

**AGW Executive Director Andrew Gunther says,**

“It is an honor to work with outstanding farmers like Ronald Simmons who are producing food in ways that are good for people, animals and the planet. Ronald is a leader in his community and a standout in the field. We couldn’t be more excited for him and the team at Master Blend Family Farms on this well-deserved recognition.”

For more information about Master Blend Family Farms, visit [masterblend.webs.com](http://masterblend.webs.com). Contact Ronald Simmons at **910-372-3372**.

**ABOUT A GREENER WORLD**

A Greener World (AGW) identifies, audits, certifies and promotes practical, sustainable farming systems by supporting farmers and ranchers and informing consumers. AGW’s growing family of trusted certifications includes [Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW](#), [Certified Grassfed by AGW](#) and [Certified Non-GMO by AGW](#). Each program is designed to have positive and measurable impacts on the environment, society and animals, and to encourage truly sustainable farming practices. AGW’s standards and procedures are robust, transparent and achievable.

A nonprofit funded by public donations and [membership](#), AGW offers a range of resources to help people make informed food choices, including an [Online Directory](#) of certified farms and products and [Food Labels Exposed](#)--a definitive guide to food label claims (available in print, online, and as a smartphone app). For more information visit [agreenerworld.org](http://agreenerworld.org).

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