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United States Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

USDA Announces Strengthened Process Verified Program

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 7, 2015 – Today, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced improvements to strengthen the USDA Process Verified Program (PVP). For almost 20 years, AMS has [administered the PVP to help agricultural suppliers differentiate their products](#) in an increasingly competitive marketplace. The changes announced today build on that strong tradition by providing the public with even greater transparency and confidence in the "USDA Process Verified" shield.

"As consumers demand additional information about food products, more and more companies are turning to USDA's Process Verified Program (PVP) to effectively communicate about specific production practices and marketing claims," said Dr. Craig Morris, Deputy Administrator of the AMS Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program. "The changes announced today are part of our commitment to continuous improvement, ensuring consistency and providing consumers with even more information about exactly what PVP-audited marketing claims mean."

First, in order to ensure consistency, increase efficiency, and protect the integrity of the PVP, AMS moved the program to a single management structure that works across commodity programs. By providing uniform requirements and auditor procedures, this guarantees that the "USDA Process Verified" shield represents the same level of transparency and independent USDA verification regardless of the product.

In addition, the USDA PVP will now require any marketing claim or verified process point to be clearly defined, in plain language, on the USDA website. All products with the "USDA Process Verified" shield

will also display the website address, so that consumers can easily find additional information about the actual meaning of any marketing claims or process points.

Both of these changes increase transparency and accountability by making it easier for consumers to understand the meaning of PVP-approved marketing claims. Consumers can be confident that labeling claims associated with the “USDA Process Verified” shield are subject to rigorous, on-site, third-party audits conducted by independent Federal employees. In turn, companies can assure customers that USDA has independently verified that their quality management systems meet the highest international standards. This allows companies to effectively communicate about specific production practices and marketing claims – from antibiotic use in animal agriculture to genetic modification of grains – that are important to consumers.

AMS looks forward to sharing stories about various companies and products that are benefiting from this valuable program.

Learn more at <http://processverified.usda.gov/>.

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