



VeriPrime Certified Safeguards

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"VERIPRIME CERTIFIED SAFEGUARDS" FOOD SAFETY LABEL UNVEILED *Label Identifies "Farm to Fork" Care and Prevention*

Wichita, KS- March 31, 2008- Beef raised and handled with rigorous and higher new safety standards, including protections against E. coli, is being offered by a cooperative of leading farmers and ranchers behind the food safety seal, "VeriPrime Certified Safeguards."

Citing growing consumer concern over food safety and food quality, VeriPrime an independent member organization, supported by a coalition of the nation's leading farmers and ranchers today unveiled the "VeriPrime Certified Safeguards" labeling and certification program. The new "VeriPrime Certified Safeguards" label on packaging instantly assures consumers that their beef products come from animals raised at facilities meeting precise and objective standards for food safety.

The system will first deliver certified beef products, but will soon expand to include pork, poultry, dairy and leafy vegetables. VeriPrime's new rigorous safeguards defend against *E. coli 0157:H7* and other food safety threats behind the VeriPrime Certified Safeguards label. Consumers will be able, at a glance, to know if the food they are buying carries the VeriPrime Certified Safeguards label. These safeguards are implemented by a farmer and rancher led initiative. When a consumer sees the new label they will know that everyone from the "farm to the fork" – as is symbolized on the label--has taken extraordinary care for them and their families.

The farmers and ranchers that operate the VeriPrime Certified Safeguards do much more than the government requires because in their words "It is just the right thing to do." The goal of the new "Certified Safeguards" label is to give consumers the option to purchase wholesome products at supermarkets and in restaurants that come from animals raised using specific safeguards.

Retailers, media, and other interested parties will be invited to attend one of a series of demonstration tours of member facilities and detailed briefings on the system. The first of these will be April 30, 2008.

The coalition also unveiled a website dedicated to the program at www.certifiedsafeguards.com. In addition to details regarding the mark, the site includes information on how producers may join the cooperative, how restaurants and grocers may obtain VeriPrime Certified Safeguards products, and how consumers may request these products at stores where they shop.

Safety practices adopted for the system are the industry's highest. Protocols adopted for this process are based on those developed by the Beef Industry Food Safety Council (BIFCO), an element of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. Animal husbandry and bio-security practices in use are also those prescribed by BIFCO. "Controlling *E. coli* O157 throughout the beef production chain makes controlling the pathogen at slaughter plants easier and every beef product safer," according to National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

The best practices were also independently evaluated by a panel of leading nutritionists and veterinarians who advise VeriPrime's members on pre-harvest standards and best practices.

The integrity of the label is backed up by independent third-party audits, ensuring that products come from animals raised and processed at facilities that are implementing the precise, objective standards perfectly. Independent audits ensure consumers that everyone that raises or handles food carrying the VeriPrime Certified Safeguards label is held accountable to an extraordinary standard of care.

There are currently over 3,000,000 head of cattle being raised following the VeriPrime safeguards. This represents an inventory of 7 million pounds of beef per day that is eligible to carry the VeriPrime Certified Safeguards label. VeriPrime is actively seeking new members that will supply beef eligible for the VeriPrime Certified Safeguards label.

ABOUT VERIPRIME

VeriPrime is a member-owned federation of cooperatives. Food, feed, and grain producers, processors, distributors and retailers can acquire membership information and application for certification on line at www.VeriPrime.org. Information about the VeriPrime Certified Safeguards label can be found at www.certifiedsafeguards.com.