

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**NORTH AMERICA'S MOST COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CERTIFICATION  
MARKS 20 YEARS WORKING FOR TRACEABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

**\$160 million worth of Food Alliance Certified products sold in 2016.**

**Portland, OR** – At a time when consumers worldwide are increasingly seeking more socially and environmentally responsible products, the non-profit Food Alliance is celebrating 20 years as the most comprehensive certification for sustainable agriculture and food handling in North America.

“Working collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders to develop sustainability standards and criteria, Food Alliance has shown that greater transparency and continual incremental improvement of management practices benefit farmers, the food industry, consumers, and the planet,” said director Matthew Buck. “We remain committed to partnering with the research, advocacy, and business communities to define and deliver *Good Food for a Healthy Future*.”

“Food Alliance has conducted over 1,000 farm, ranch and facility audits,” he added. “That experience has given us insights into how farm and food businesses benefit from implementation of more sustainable practices, what values retailers and consumers want represented in the food they buy, and what social and environmental marketing claims are both credible and compelling.”

Food Alliance started in 1994 as a project of Oregon State University, Washington State University, and the Washington State Department of Agriculture, with a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, to develop standards for sustainable agriculture. Food Alliance was launched as an independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization in 1997. Stahlbush Island Farms outside Corvallis, Oregon became the first Food Alliance certified farm in September that year -- and now markets Food Alliance certified frozen fruits and vegetables nationwide. Director of Agriculture Quality & Compliance Tina Galloway said, “Now there is a growing chorus of claims about where food comes from and how it is grown. Food Alliance was there back at the beginning of the conversation and has always been a steadfast, credible and authentic advocate for sustainability.”

Over the last two decades, Food Alliance has diversified by product category and geography. Criteria for livestock were introduced in 2000. Certification for food handlers, including packers, processors and distributors, debuted in 2006. Programs followed for grassfed livestock claims (2009), farmed shellfish (2011), and nursery products (2012). Food Alliance certification has also spread from the Pacific Northwest to 25 US states. An update to Food Alliance standards and criteria implemented in 2015 now allows certification anywhere in North America.

In 2016, Food Alliance partnered with the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Rainforest Alliance to develop a Grasslands Alliance standard for regenerative grazing in North America. That draft standard is posted for public review and comment at [grasslandsalliance.org](http://grasslandsalliance.org). Starting in 2017, Food Alliance will also be providing audits for the National Audubon Society's Conservation Ranching program for restoration and enhancement of habitat important to grassland birds.

In 2016 sales of Food Alliance Certified products reached \$160 million, a figure representing the farm gate value of fresh products, and added wholesale value of processed products. Since inception of the program, over \$1.2 billion in Food Alliance Certified products have been sold.

**General Information about Food Alliance**

Food Alliance is a non-profit organization that develops sustainable agriculture and food handling standards, and audits farms, ranches, and food processors and distributors for sustainable practices. Businesses that meet the standards, as determined by a third-party site inspection, can use Food Alliance certification to make credible claims for social and environmental responsibility, to differentiate and add value to products, and to protect and strengthen brands.

Food Alliance certification standards for farmers and ranchers include:

- Safe and fair working conditions
- Healthy and humane care for livestock
- No hormones or non-therapeutic antibiotics
- No GMO crops or livestock
- Minimize toxic and hazardous materials risks
- Conservation of soil and water resources
- Protection of wildlife habitat and biodiversity
- Continually improved management practices

Food Alliance offers certification for:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Nuts
- Grains
- Dried Beans/Lentils
- Beef and Bison
- Chicken and Turkey
- Eggs
- Lamb and Goat Meat
- Milk and Dairy Products
- Pork
- Shellfish (farmed only)
- Processed Food Products
- Nursery Products

A selection of companies with Food Alliance Certified products includes:

- Agrocosa (onions, peppers)
- Ayrshire Farm (beef and pork)
- Central Bean Company (dried beans)
- Coast Seafoods Company (shellfish)
- Edelweiss Nut Company (almonds)
- Food Services of America – PDX (distributor)
- Hog Island Oyster Company (shellfish)
- Monrovia – Dayton (nursery products)
- NORPAC (processed vegetables)
- Nuto Farm Supply (potatoes)
- Palouse Trading (dried beans, wheat, flours)
- Pure Country Pork (pork)
- Shepherd’s Grain (wheat flours)
- Stahlbush Island Farms (proc. fruits & veg.)
- Taylor Shellfish (shellfish)
- Three Springs Fruit Farm (fresh fruits and veg.)

Food Alliance’s board of directors includes:

- Justin Boevers, Director of Operations, FishChoice.com
- Greg Holmes, Food Systems Program Director, 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Randy Lyons, Operations Manager, NORPAC Foods, Inc.
- Jenna Newbrey, NW Regional Coordinator, Health Care Without Harm
- Brandy Sargent, Counsel, K&L Gates LLP
- Mark Swenson, Director of Purchasing Initiatives, Bon Appétit Management Company
- Chris Wille, Independent Consultant and a founder of the Rainforest Alliance

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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