

For Immediate Release

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**True Source Honey™ Launches Certified Honey Traceability Program
To Protect Honey Consumers and Customers**

(Galveston, Texas January 11, 2011) The True Source Honey™ Initiative enthusiastically announces the launch of a Certified Honey Traceability Program beginning in January 2011. The program officially known as True Source Certified™ was unveiled at the 2011 North American Beekeeping Conference in Galveston this past week. Details were revealed regarding the program, which is designed to certify the origin of honey being distributed and consumed within North America, resulting in better food safety and product purity assurances for quality-minded customers and consumers. Further details of the program have been posted at www.TrueSourceHoney.com.

This new voluntary program is open to all interested honey companies (packers, beekeepers, importers and exporters) who desire True Source Certification. It was developed by a multi-disciplined group of industry participants who want to maximize industry participation in solving the problem of illegally sourced honey. Intertek, an internationally recognized third party audit firm, will begin conducting audits for any interested candidates starting this month. The program will help create transparency within the industry, going beyond current certification expectations and federal regulations while adding an additional layer of traceability beginning at the hive. For those applying for certification, Intertek will conduct unannounced inspections, review documents and collect samples for country-of-origin verification.

There are a number of honey companies in North America that have resolved to purchase only legal, properly sourced honey from legitimate sources. These companies now have an opportunity to certify their purchasing practices through an independent third party auditor, enhancing customer and consumer confidence while clearly demonstrating the value which they have been providing.

Most imported and domestic honey is from high-quality, legal sources. However, some importers and honey packers have been illegally importing honey by misrepresenting the true country-of-origin, in order to circumvent dumping duties of \$1.20 per pound that have been assessed against certain countries. This results in honey being sold to companies and consumers that is of questionable origin. In addition to creating food safety issues for consumers, this practice threatens the honey industry by undercutting fair market prices and damaging honey's reputation for quality and safety.

"Cheap illegal imports hurt all legitimate U.S. packers and beekeepers," said David Mendes, president of the American Beekeeping Federation. "I applaud the efforts of the True Source Honey Initiative to create a "bottom up" solution to illegal transshipment. I would encourage U.S. beekeepers to support this effort."

The new certification system is consistent with the latest food safety reforms, including the new FDA Food Safety Modernization Act of 2010. The new law is designed to change the mission of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) so that the agency is focused on preventing food-borne illnesses and implementing new import requirements that provide for tighter controls.

Since these new food safety-related traceability requirements are now statutory law, the True Source Certified system has been designed to accommodate these new mandates.

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The True Source Honey Initiative is an effort by a number of honey companies and importers to call attention to the problem of illegally sourced honey; to encourage action to protect consumers and customers from these practices; and to highlight and support legal, transparent and ethical sourcing. The initiative seeks to help maintain the reputation of honey as a high-quality, highly valued food and further sustain the U.S. honey sector. For more information, visit www.TrueSourceHoney.com and follow us on [Twitter](#) at and [Facebook](#).