



First Pork Farm Certified Under New Food Alliance Standards *Ensures animal welfare, responsible social and environmental practices*

PORTLAND, Ore., July 25, 2007 – Pure Country Pork of Ephrata, Wash., is the first farm to earn certification from the non-profit organization Food Alliance under a [new national standard for pork production](#). One of the most comprehensive agricultural eco-labels in North America, *Food Alliance Certified* goes beyond humane animal treatment, also covering labor conditions and environmental protection.

“It’s really a new world for agriculture,” said Pure Country Manager Paul Klingeman, explaining his decision to seek certification. “More and more people want to know where their food is coming from and how it’s being produced – and every new story that breaks in the newspaper is pushing them towards foods that meet independent, third-party standards.”

“We’re deeply committed to the health and well-being of our animals,” Klingeman continued. “Our hogs are raised in open hoop houses with free access to food, fresh water, and clean bedding. They live in small social groups in a stimulating environment where they can have stress-free interaction with each other. And, of course, they are never fed animal by-products or given antibiotics. Now we have Food Alliance behind us to assure our customers we really are doing this the best, most sustainable way possible.”

Pure Country Pork sells approximately 8,000 hogs a year to grocery stores such as New Seasons Markets in Portland and PCC Markets in Seattle, and to Masami Foods Inc. which sells to select customers in Japan and the US. Some hogs are also sold directly to consumers.

Alan Hummel, Meat and Seafood Director for New Seasons Markets, is excited to have certified pork in stores. He said, “The conundrum with sustainable has been in defining and measuring what it is or isn’t. We felt the need for some criteria for sustainable, so that our customers can trust the quality of the products they buy from us. Food Alliance has been really valuable in that regard. We already buy Food Alliance certified beef. We’re definitely encouraging our other meat suppliers to seek certification.”

Food Alliance introduced its [new national pork standard](#) in June of 2007. “We developed the original standard to serve some very small-scale pork producers in the Midwest,” explains Food Alliance executive director Scott Exo. “As interest in the certification increased, the challenge for us was to write a standard that was appropriate for producers across the country, operating at all scales, while maintaining the same high expectations for animal welfare, labor conditions and environmental stewardship.”

Food Alliance pork standards prohibit the use of gestation and farrowing crates, which severely limit the movement of sows during breeding, birth, and weaning – a “hot button” issue for animal welfare advocates. Food Alliance does allow the use of larger farrowing pens, as long as they are at least five-by-seven feet in area, which help protect piglets from being crushed but allow sows to stand, turn or lie down at will.

Food Alliance certification goes beyond other animal welfare certification programs by including additional criteria for manure management, soil and water conservation, pest management, wildlife habitat protection, and requirements for safe and fair working conditions. “That’s part of the attraction of this program for me,” said Klingeman. “There’s a lot more going on on a farm than just how the animals are treated.”

About Food Alliance

Food Alliance is a non-profit organization that certifies farms, ranches and food handlers (including processors and distributors) for sustainable agricultural and production practices. Businesses that meet Food Alliance's standards, as determined by a third-party site inspection, use certification to make credible claims for social and environmental responsibility, differentiating their products and strengthening their 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 genetically modified crops or livestock
- Reduction of pesticide use and toxicity
- Conservation of soil and water resources
- Protection of wildlife habitat
- Planning for continuous improvement

Certification standards for food processors and distributors include:

- Use of Food Alliance certified products
- Safe and fair working conditions
- Conservation of energy and water
- Reduction and recycling of waste
- Reduction of toxic and hazardous materials
- No artificial colors, flavors or preservatives
- Quality control and food safety
- Planning for continuous improvement

The complete standards for both producers and handlers are available at www.foodalliance.org.

Food Alliance launched its certification program in 1998 in Portland, Oregon, with a single apple grower selling in three area grocery stores. Today, there are more than 270 Food Alliance certified farms and ranches in 17 U.S. states, Canada and Mexico. These producers manage more than 5.17 million acres of range and farm land, raising beef, lamb, pork, dairy products, mushrooms, wheat, legumes, and a wide variety of fresh market fruits and vegetables. Food Alliance has also certified three distribution facilities and 12 processors offering cheeses, dried beans and lentils, and frozen and canned fruits and vegetables. Food Alliance has offices in Oregon, Minnesota and California.

About Pure Country Pork

Pure Country Pork is brought to you by Paul and Kerrie Klingeman, and our son, Paul Klingeman, Jr. From birth to harvest, we strive to raise the most economical, highest-quality, free-range pork possible, without vaccinations, antibiotics, or animal by-products. We believe a natural pig should be raised in an environment where the sow and her offspring are not caged or confined, but are allowed free movement. Instead of enclosed buildings and concrete flooring, our natural pigs are given plenty of space, air and light and have access to natural bedding. We check on our animals regularly throughout the day to be sure they always have free access to feed and water, and to watch for any signs of injury or illness. Any pig that requires treatment is removed from our natural pig program.

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