

Nielsen-Massey® Becomes First Major Ingredient Supplier In The United States To Receive Independent Gluten-Free Certification

Nielsen-Massey Vanillas®, one of the world's leading purveyors of premium pure vanilla products and other fine extracts since 1907, is the first extract company and ingredient supplier in the United States to be certified by the Gluten-Free Certification Organization (GFCO). Soon the GFCO's circle GF certification mark will be featured on Nielsen-Massey packaging. The new mark will give all Nielsen-Massey customers (retail consumers, product manufacturers, bakers, restaurateurs, and others) the assurance that Nielsen-Massey's fine vanillas and extracts are gluten-free.

WAUKEGAN, IL (PRWEB) October 4, 2006 -- Nielsen-Massey Vanillas®, one of the world's leading purveyors of premium pure vanilla products and other fine extracts since 1907, is the first extract company and ingredient supplier in the United States to be certified by the Gluten-Free Certification Organization (GFCO). Soon the GFCO's circle GF certification mark will be featured on Nielsen-Massey packaging. The new mark will give all Nielsen-Massey customers (retail consumers, product manufacturers, bakers, restaurateurs, and others) the assurance that Nielsen-Massey's fine vanillas and extracts are gluten-free.

“For many years now we have been responding to customer inquiries about whether our products are gluten-free,” said Matt Nielsen, COO of Nielsen-Massey Vanillas®. “Now, we're proud to be able to provide them with the confidence and safety assurance this new certification from GFCO provides. As a family-owned business, we have always placed our customers first, and this is one additional way to demonstrate our commitment to them.”

“Nielsen-Massey has shown significant leadership by being the first major ingredient company to seek GFCO certification,” added Cynthia Kupper, Executive Director of the Gluten Intolerance Group, the 501 (c)(3) organization that administers the GFCO program. “Consumers with gluten-sensitivity need to be sure that all ingredients in a product are gluten-free.”

The GFCO is the first program of its kind in the world to supervise the manufacturing and testing protocol of companies that market gluten-free (GF) foods, for the purpose of offering consumers a third-party assurance of safety. This new independent food processing inspection program will verify that food products meet the highest standards for GF ingredients and are produced in a safe environment.

Food manufacturers have been quick to recognize the growing demand for GF foods. According to SPINS data, sales of GF products in mainstream grocery stores grew 18% from June 2004 to June 2005 and are likely to grow by over 10% each year for the foreseeable future. Additionally, the 2,800-plus GF products available in stores today produce annual sales topping \$700 million. Although many more GF products have become available in the past few years, adhering to a GF diet remains difficult and frustrating, since gluten is so prevalent in processed foods. A great deal of time is required to read food labels, contact food manufacturers and search GF product lists. Consumers want a quick means to determine if a product is safe, and the GFCO provides exactly that.

About Food Allergies and Celiac Disease

According to a 2004 study by the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, at least 11 million Americans are affected by one or more food allergies. This means that one in 25 people in the U.S. is unable to consume a range of basic, familiar ingredients without triggering serious, and sometimes lethal,

immune system responses. In addition, nearly 3 million Americans – or about one percent of the population – suffer from Celiac Disease (CD).

Celiac Disease is an autoimmune disease that affects the small intestine and is the result of an immune-mediated response from the ingestion of gluten (from wheat, rye, and barley) that damages the small intestine. It is an autoimmune disease and there is no cure and no treatment except strict adherence to a gluten-free diet. It is also referred to as Gluten Sensitive Enteropathy (GSE), Gluten Intolerance or Celiac Sprue. Celiac Disease is considered to be the most under-diagnosed common disease today and if left untreated can ultimately lead to malnutrition. The disease is permanent, and damage to the small intestine will occur every time any amount of gluten is ingested, regardless if symptoms are present.

About GFCO

The Gluten-Free Certification Organization (GFCO) is a program of the Gluten Intolerance Group®, and is governed by an independent volunteer board that includes physicians, food scientists and consumers.

Key elements of the GFCO process include:

- Ingredients review, down to the original supplier
- Onsite inspections by experienced, trained Field Inspection Agents
- Product and ingredient testing using scientifically-proven tests
- GFCO certification mark located on product packages for easy identification.

For more information visit: <http://www.gfco.org>.

About Nielsen-Massey

Worldwide, Nielsen-Massey meets the demand for its all natural, pure products. Its corporate headquarters is located in Waukegan, Illinois, USA with production facilities in both Waukegan and at Nielsen-Massey Vanillas International, LLC. in Leeuwarden, Netherlands. Additionally, Nielsen-Massey is audited annually by the American Institute of Baking, from whom it has received Superior ratings each year since 1990. All Nielsen-Massey's products are Kosher certified and they have been a certified organic producer since 1998.

The Waukegan facility supplies products to North America, South America, Central America, and the Pacific Rim. And since 1995, the European facility has provided a cost-effective means of pure vanilla supply to the European, African and Middle Eastern markets. To help meet this need, Nielsen-Massey has global representatives in many countries to provide ongoing support and product information to customers.

As a family owned and managed business, Nielsen-Massey is committed to and truly cares about its customers. With this commitment comes a pledge to continue producing the world's finest pure products batch after batch - a promise that has been kept for nearly a century.

For more information visit: www.nielsenmassey.com.

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