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National Foundation for Celiac Awareness Joins North American Partnership to Launch First Gluten-Free Certification Program Endorsed in US and Canada

The Gluten-Free Certification Program (GFCP) and the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness (NFCA) are pleased to announce their alliance. NFCA's certification trademark provides customers with a trusted and easily identifiable source of safe gluten-free products.

Ambler, Pa. (July 16, 2013) - The National Foundation for Celiac Awareness (NFCA), a non-profit organization serving individuals with celiac disease and other gluten-related disorders, has formed an alliance with the Gluten-Free Certification Program, developed by Canadian Celiac Association (CCA), to launch the first gluten-free certification program endorsed by leading celiac disease organizations in North America.

"The GFCP alliance means consumers with celiac disease and gluten sensitivity will have more choices, greater assurance and an easier way to identify gluten-free products that are trusted and safe," said Alice Bast, President of the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness. "The GFCP has already achieved great success in Canada, and we are eager to expand its benefits to our community here in the US."

The Gluten-Free Certification Program (GFCP) will provide consumer guidance and protection by differentiating certified products from the increasing clutter of gluten-free claims in the marketplace. The GFCP requires annual certification audits conducted by independent ISO accredited auditing companies, which ensure that certified products meet the industry's most stringent gluten-free food safety requirements in the US and Canada. This third party relationship is a critical and defining part of the GFCP, as it eliminates any conflict of interest between the manufacturer's relationship with the program, its certifying bodies and/or the NFCA.



Gluten-free consumers can now *shop with confidence* by looking for the trusted NFCA certification trademark on product packages.

"We at the GFCP are very excited about our partnership with the NFCA. By combining the endorsement of the NFCA and their strong industry relationships, together with the technical strengths of our program, I am confident we will be able to deliver a comprehensive value proposition that is yet to be seen in the US marketplace," said Paul Valder, President of the Gluten-Free Certification Program.

Celiac disease is an autoimmune disorder that affects an estimated 1 in 133 Americans. Eighty-three percent of people with celiac disease are undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. The disease can cause debilitating symptoms and, if left untreated, lead to life-threatening health conditions. There is no cure, but celiac disease can be treated with a strict, lifelong gluten-free diet.

NFCA advocates on behalf of the millions of Americans suffering from celiac disease and other gluten-related disorders who are frustrated by the uncertainty of identifying gluten-free products that are essential to their well-being.

"NFCA shares the CCA's mission to protect consumers with celiac disease and non-celiac gluten sensitivity and will lend a strong voice to the call for safety and accountability as demonstrated by GFCP standards," said Peter Taylor, Executive Director of the Canadian Celiac Association. "We embrace their participation in this important cross-border commitment."

To learn more about the NFCA endorsed Gluten-Free Certification Program, visit www.gf-cert.org.

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About the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness

The National Foundation for Celiac Awareness (NFCA) is a US-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that drives diagnoses of celiac disease and other gluten-related disorders and improves the quality of life for those on a lifelong gluten-free diet. For more information visit www.CeliacCentral.org.

About the Gluten-Free Certification Program

The Gluten-Free Certification Program (GFCP) was developed so consumers can shop with confidence by selecting those safe, reliable and gluten-free products displaying the GFCP trademark and is endorsed by the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness and the Canadian Celiac Association.

The GFCP is a voluntary certification program designed to help brand owners differentiate their gluten-free products from the increasing clutter of gluten-free claims in the market place, by displaying the GFCP trademark. Based on a robust third-party audit certification process at the manufacturing facility, the GFCP verifies the ability to regularly meet stringent requirements, when managing gluten as part of their food safety programs.