

# Real Food Guide

version 1.0

Local & Community-Based	Fair	Ecologically Sound	Humane
<b>Green Light: best represents standard and counts as real food</b>			
<p>Producer<sup>1</sup> must be a privately-traded or cooperatively- owned business that grosses less than 1% of the industry leader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independently owned businesses must have full autonomy and decision-making power about business processing &amp; distribution practices.</li> <li>All production, processing, &amp; distribution facilities controlled by the producer, its parent or family companies, and contract farmers must be within <b>150 miles</b> of the institution.</li> </ul> <p>Products from cooperatively owned businesses must have been produced, processed, and distributed within <b>150 miles</b> of the institution. Must be a true co-op rather than contractors to a larger corporation</p>	<p>Products with the following certifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Ecocert Fair Trade Certified</i></li> <li>Fair Food Standards Council Fair Food Program (Coalition of Immokalee Workers tomatoes)</li> <li><i>Fair for Life Certified</i> by IMO</li> <li><i>Fair Trade Certified</i> by Fair Labeling Organization (FLO)</li> <li><i>Fair Trade Certified</i> by Fair Trade USA*</li> <li><i>Food Justice Certified</i> by Agricultural Justice Project</li> </ul> <p>Single Source product that can confirm in writing the following for ALL employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living wage</li> <li>Right to benefits</li> <li>Day of rest and overtime</li> <li>Seniority</li> <li>Equal pay for equal or equivalent work</li> <li>Right to return to seasonal position</li> <li>Right to freedom of association</li> </ul>	<p>Products with the following certifications or claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Biodynamic Certified</i> by Demeter</li> <li><i>Food Alliance Certified*</i></li> <li><i>USDA Organic**</i></li> <li><i>Protected Harvest Certification</i></li> <li><i>Rainforest Alliance Certified**</i></li> </ul> <p>Fish Only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Marine Stewardship Council</i></li> <li>Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Guide "Best Choices" (Regional Guide or Buyer's Guide)</li> </ul> <p>Coffee Only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Bird Friendly</i> by Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center</li> </ul> <p>Produce grown in a farm or garden at the institution, in which the researcher can confirm the use of organic practices</p>	<p>Products with the following certifications or claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Animal Welfare Approved</i> by Animal Welfare Institute</li> <li><i>Biodynamic Certified</i> by Demeter</li> <li><i>Global Animal Partnership Steps 4-5+</i></li> <li><i>Certified Humane</i> by Humane Farm Animal Care<sup>2,3</sup></li> </ul>

**Yellow Light: counts as real food, but not as strict as Green Light**

<p>Producer must be a privately-traded or cooperatively owned business that grosses less than 1% of the industry leader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independently owned businesses must have full autonomy and decision-making power about business, processing, &amp; distribution practices.</li> <li>All production, processing, &amp; distribution facilities controlled by the producer, its parent or family companies, and contract farmers must be within <b>250 miles</b> of the institution.</li> <li>Products from cooperatively owned businesses must have been produced, processed, and distributed within <b>250 miles</b> of the institution.</li> <li>Must be a true co-op rather than a contractor to a larger corporation</li> </ul> <p>For multi-source or multi-ingredient products, producer and 50% of the ingredients<sup>4</sup> must meet all of the above criteria.</p>	<p>50% of the ingredients in the product meet the above standards.</p> <p>Products with the following certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Fair Trade Certified Ingredient</i> by Fair Trade USA</li> </ul>	<p>Products with the following certifications or claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Fair Trade Certified</i> by Fair Trade USA*</li> <li>Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Guide "Good Alternatives" (Regional Guide or Buyer's Guide)</li> <li><i>Salmon Safe</i></li> <li><i>Transitional Organic</i> by OIA</li> </ul> <p>For multi-source or multi-ingredient products, producer and 50% of the ingredients<sup>4</sup> must meet all of the above criteria.</p>	<p>All Species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Certified Organic</i> by USDA-AMS* **</li> <li><i>Food Alliance Certified*</i></li> <li><i>Global Animal Partnership</i> Step 3</li> </ul> <p>Ruminants Only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>AGA Grassfed</i></li> <li>"Process Verified Grassfed" ** by USDA-AMS and either "Never Ever 3 by USDA-FSIS" or "Naturally Raised" by USDA-AMS</li> </ul> <p>Hogs Only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Certified Humane</i> by Humane Farm Animal Care</li> </ul> <p>Egg-Layers Only**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>American Humane Certified</i> (no enriched cage eggs)</li> </ul> <p>"Cage-Free" by USDA-AMS</p>
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**Red Light: good start but not enough to count as real food.**  
**Product can meet real food criteria in other categories.**

<p>Producer is independently or cooperatively owned but does not meet the above criteria.</p>	<p>Products with the following certifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Rainforest Alliance Certified*</i> by Rainforest Alliance</li> <li>• <i>Food Alliance Certified*</i></li> </ul> <p>Products that have been processed or shipped by companies with fair labor conditions comprised of ingredients with unconfirmed labor standards.</p>	<p>Products with the following claims or certifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Raised without Antibiotics"</li> <li>• "No Antibiotics Administered"</li> <li>• "Never Ever 3"</li> <li>• "Naturally Raised" by USDA-FSIS</li> <li>• <i>GAP Certified</i> (Good Agricultural Practices) by USDA</li> </ul>	<p>Products with the following claims or certifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Global Animal Partnership</i> Steps 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>• "Grass fed" by USDA-FSIS (Ruminants)</li> <li>• "Gestation Crate Free" (Hogs)</li> <li>• "Free range" by USDA-FSIS (poultry)</li> <li>• "Free roaming" by USDA-FSIS (poultry)</li> <li>• "rBGH-free/rBST-free" by FDA (dairy)</li> </ul>
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**Red Light: claim does not necessarily have substance, not real food.**  
**Product can meet real food criteria in other categories.**

		<p>Products with the following claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Natural"</li> <li>• "GM Free"</li> <li>• "GMO Free"</li> </ul>	<p>Products with the following certification: <i>GAP Certified</i> (Good Agricultural Practices) by USDA</p>
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**Red Light: no way, not real food.**  
**Product can meet real food criteria in other categories.**

<p>Producer does not meet any of the above criteria.</p>	<p>Multi-source, highly processed products with no certification.</p>	<p>Products with the following claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Guide "Avoid" (regional guide)</li> </ul> <p>Confinement or Battery Cages</p>	<p>Confinement or Battery cages, enriched cages, gestation crates, veal crates</p>
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**Disqualifications: Product containing disqualifying characteristics cannot count as real food in any category.**

- Producer is known to be found guilty of criminal charges of slave labor or indentured servitude within the previous 10 years; producer is known to have been found guilty of, been cited, or settled a case relating to an OSHA, FSLA, or NLRB violation within the last 3 years.
- Producer is known to be a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO)
- Product is likely to contain GMOs (e.g. non-organic high fructose corn syrup, soy, beet sugar)
- Product contains any of the following: Acesulfame-Potassium, Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA), Caramel Coloring, Olestra (Olean), Partially Hydrogenated Oil (trans-fats), Propyl Gallate, rGBH/rBST, Saccharine, sodium nitrate added, sodium nitrite added; Dyes: Red #3, Yellow #5, Yellow #6, Blue #3

## Legend

*Italics* = There is strong, third-party verification of the claim through a certification

"Text with Quotes" = Industry claim

\* = Certification/claim occurs in more than one column

\*\* = Needs verification that it is not from a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO)

<sup>1</sup> Producer is defined as the entity that produces the product. Thus, it could be a farmer, rancher, bakery, corporation, etc.

<sup>2</sup> For poultry, verify "Free Range" standards are followed

<sup>3</sup> Does not include hogs (*Certified Humane* hogs fall under Yellow Light)

<sup>4</sup> Ingredients are defined as raw ingredients. Ingredients must meet a given criterion at the first step of the supply chain to qualify as Real Food.

For additional guidance on how to best use this guide, see the [Assessment Tips](#) and [Calculator F.A.Q.](#)