



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Horizon Organic<sup>®</sup> Applauds the National Organic Program's New, Stricter Pasture Regulations**

*Regulations help clear up confusion for farmers and consumers alike*

**BROOMFIELD, Colo. (February 12, 2010)** – Horizon Organic<sup>®</sup>, the nation's leading organic dairy brand, is pleased to announce its support of the Pasture Rule published by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

"We are grateful to the Administration for helping usher through this critically important rule clarification," said Kelly Shea, Vice President of Government and Industry Relations for WhiteWave Foods. "We have long believed in the need for universally enforceable pasture regulations that hold all organic dairy producers to the same high standard."

Since the brand's beginnings in 1991, Horizon has been a leader in the organic dairy movement and played a key role in helping develop the National Organic Standards and the USDA Organic Seal. As part of its commitment to organic leadership and helping grow and support the organic industry, the brand has long been working with non-governmental organizations such as the National Organic Coalition, the Organic Trade Association (OTA), the Federation Of Organic Dairy Farmers (FOOD), and the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA) to petition for stronger and more enforceable regulation around pasture.

The new rule highlights the following:

- Animals must graze pasture for at least 120 days during the grazing season;
- During the grazing season, animals must obtain a minimum of 30 percent dry matter intake from grazing pasture;
- Producers must have a pasture management plan and manage pasture as a crop to meet the feed requirements for the grazing animals and to protect soil and water quality

The final rule becomes effective 120 days after publication, June 17, 2010. Operations which are already certified organic will have one year to implement the provisions. Operations which obtain organic certification after the effective date will be expected to demonstrate full compliance.

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In anticipation of these new regulations Horizon has already been operating its company-owned farms in accordance with these new standards, as outlined in the brand's "Standards of Care" document. The "Standards of Care" govern the management practices used on the two company farms as well as set the expectations for the 492 family farmer partners that supply the brand with nearly 90 percent of its milk. These standards are the result of collaboration with organic agriculture and livestock experts and almost 20 years of collective experience in organic dairy farming.

"We are very pleased that this new rule clarification will help ensure that consumers can count on and trust the integrity of organic dairy products," said Ron Schnur, Vice President of Dairy Supply Chain. "As we have always done since our earliest days as an organic pioneer, we will continue to work with our almost 500 family farmers to ensure that all Horizon milk is produced in a way that meets or exceeds the high standards as set by the National Organic Program."

#### **ABOUT HORIZON**

Horizon believes the choice for a healthy family and a healthy planet should be an easy one. Horizon offers a delicious variety of certified organic dairy products and innovative natural dairy offerings to satisfy a broad range of consumer needs. Horizon's commitment to a healthier planet includes offsetting the energy used to produce its products with clean, renewable wind power. Founded in 1991, Horizon was a pioneer in the organic industry, the first company to supply organic milk nationally, and remains committed to providing great-tasting dairy products that make it easy for moms to provide nutritious options for her kids. For more information about Horizon's organic and natural dairy products, visit [www.horizondairy.com](http://www.horizondairy.com).

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