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**ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED PROGRAM TAKES MAJOR STEPS TO BECOMING THE  
LEADING HIGH-WELFARE FOOD LABEL  
FOR MEAT, POULTRY, EGGS AND DAIRY PRODUCTS**

**--Andrew Gunther from Whole Foods Market Appointed New Program Director--**

**--New Website Launched: [www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org](http://www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org)--**

Washington, DC, June 2, 2008—Cathy Liss, President of the Animal Welfare Institute, today announced several major changes and initiatives for its Animal Welfare Approved program. The Animal Welfare Approved program and food label--offered free of charge to farmers who meet its standards--promote the well-being of animals and the sustainability of humane family farms. The program is designed to unite conscientious consumers with farmers who raise their animals with compassion.

**NEW PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

Andrew Gunther has joined the Animal Welfare Approved program as program director. Previously, he was the senior global animal compassionate product procurement and development specialist for Whole Foods Market, leading the team that designed and launched the company's five-step welfare program in the United Kingdom. Gunther pioneered the world's first organic poultry hatchery for chickens, and then added ducks. The Gunther family also managed the production for the largest independent organic chicken producer in the United Kingdom. Additionally, Gunther has served as the organic voice within the UK's Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) poultry working group. He is currently part of the Texas State Board of Agriculture's organic advisory board and a member of the American Association of Agricultural scientists.

"We are fortunate that Andrew has accepted the post of program director for us. His vast experience with farming, marketing humanely produced products and successfully developing and managing a standards-based program will make a huge difference in our ability to help farmers bring their humanely raised products to market," remarked Liss. "He leads an outstanding team of auditors, advisors and staff members who unite our farmers with consumers who are increasingly concerned about their food sources and the treatment of farm animals."

Animal Welfare Approved is a Program of the Animal Welfare Institute

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"I am pleased to be in a position where we can impact real change. The Animal Welfare Approved program gives us the opportunity to combine high quality, safe food with the best animal welfare by working with and supporting the true custodians of the rural community, family farmers," said Gunther.

He continued, "Animal Welfare Approved's core standard of allowing animals to forage and graze as nature intended has been shown to be safer for the consumer and kinder to the animals and the environment. I find myself in a unique position that allows me to combine my passions: animal welfare, farmers rights, high-quality, safe food and environmental sustainability. I will miss a lot of great folks at Whole Foods, but hope to be able to work with them in the future as we have a common interest in improving the welfare of animals raised for food."

**NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED: [www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org](http://www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org)**

On Thursday, May 22, the Animal Welfare Approved program launched a new website, complete with a searchable database for where products can be found, the standards themselves, and a wealth of information about food labels, animal welfare and farms for consumers, farmers and the press. New features will be added to the site regularly in the upcoming months.

**OVERVIEW**

More than 600 farms are accredited by the Animal Welfare Approved program, which is rapidly expanding. These products are available from Cates Family Farm, Drakes Bay Family Farms, Cane Creek Farm, Parker Farms, MAE Farm, Willow Creek Farm, Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch, Whitmore Farms, and from companies including Niman Ranch, William's Pork, and Heritage Foods USA. Animal Welfare Approved products are available nationally at many Whole Foods Markets, Wild Oats and Trader Joe's and dozens of restaurants. For more information contact [info@animalwelfareapproved.org](mailto:info@animalwelfareapproved.org), visit [www.animalwelfareapproved.org](http://www.animalwelfareapproved.org), or call (703) 836-4300.

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*Animal Welfare Approved is a program of the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI). For over 50 years, the nonprofit Institute has worked to reduce the pain and fear humans inflict on animals. AWI promotes humane farming practices and fights the growth of animal factories for the benefit of animals, consumers, farm families, rural communities and the environment. For more information, visit [www.AWIONline.org](http://www.AWIONline.org).*