



For Immediate Release  
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## **DEMAND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED PRODUCTS CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARMERS**

**Alexandria, VA**—Surging demand for [Animal Welfare Approved](#) meat, dairy and eggs is creating opportunities for family farmers in the southeast and mid-Atlantic regions of the country. Animal Welfare Approved ranches in the southeast are in need of calves to supply AWA grassfed operations and Animal Welfare Approved has a growing backlog of restaurants and other outlets in the mid-Atlantic hoping to source only AWA eggs. "We've got the markets, we've got the interest, we've got the momentum," says Animal Welfare Approved Program Director Andrew Gunther. "Now we are working on adding farms to the program to meet the demand."

Gunther is looking to add as many committed high-welfare farmers to the program as possible and admits that this could take some time. "We have to audit all the farms that apply and it's a very thorough process. We're not willing to compromise or cut corners to rush products to market." The AWA program has more than tripled in the past year and the past few months have seen a definite upswing in the volume of inquiries from restaurants and retailers looking to source AWA meat, dairy and eggs.

AWA has posted announcements and advertisements seeking farmers to supply calves and eggs, specifically targeting grassfed cattle farmers in the southeast and egg producers in the mid-Atlantic. However, all farmers interested in AWA certification are encouraged to apply. "Demand is only going to increase. Meat, dairy and eggs from sustainable farms and humanely raised animals are important to consumers and it's no longer a niche or trend, it's established in the mainstream. For farmers who have been considering AWA certification or converting from conventional to pasture-based farming, now is the time," Gunther adds.

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The Animal Welfare Approved program is free to farmers and is the only farm animal welfare label that requires animals to be raised on pasture. AWA standards are science-based, practical and freely available on the AWA website and the label is USDA recognized. AWA offers technical and marketing support, FSIS and USDA labeling assistance and offers grants for farmers.

Farmers interested in learning about AWA certification or in helping to fulfill the need for calves or eggs should email AWA at [info@animalwelfareapproved.org](mailto:info@animalwelfareapproved.org) or call 202-546-5292.

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*Animal Welfare Approved audits and certifies family farms that raise their animals with the highest animal welfare standards, outdoors, on pasture or range. The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) has lauded these standards for two years running as being the most stringent when compared to other third-party certification programs. Visit [www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org](http://www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org) for a searchable database of approved farms and restaurants, shops and markets where our farmers' products are sold. Choose the one independent food label that means healthy, safe, environmentally responsible and humanely raised.*