



Food Lion Announces New Sustainability Policies Bolstering Product Labeling and Animal Welfare

July 30, 2020

SALISBURY, N.C., July 30, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- In its latest move to make its products and packaging more sustainable, Food Lion has announced today new sustainability policies for genetically modified food (GMOs) and farm animal welfare.

Working in partnership with Retail Business Services, which develops private brand products for each of the Ahold Delhaize USA local brands, Food Lion and Retail Business Services is requiring all private brand products to have clear on-pack Bioengineered Food labeling.

"At Food Lion, a healthy and sustainable community is at the heart of everything we do," said Geoff Waldau, executive vice president of Merchandising at Food Lion. "We are committed to nourishing our neighbors in the towns and cities we serve in a sustainable manner. In addition to providing healthier food choices and more locally sourced products for our customers, we are working hard to deliver greater transparency into the food they buy. The addition of these policies furthers our commitment to nutritious, transparent products that meet our customers' preferences and lifestyles."

The announcement of these policies builds on previously-announced commitments regarding [sustainable chemistry](#), climate change and artificial ingredients. It also builds on Food Lion's announcement that it joined the [Ocean Disclosure Project](#) early in 2020 to increase transparency of sustainable seafood sourcing efforts. Food Lion has an industry-leading sustainable seafood policy covering more than 2,500 products, and all its own brand coffee, cocoa, tea and soy products are 100 percent sustainably sourced.

GMOs

Under the new GMO policy, Food Lion is requiring all private brand products to have clear on-pack Bioengineered Food labeling, well ahead of the Federal Bioengineered labeling deadline of January 1, 2022.

Food Lion supports the National Bioengineered Food* Disclosure Standard and is also committed to monitoring science and assessing risk around GMOs and will look to organizations like the World Health Organization, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. National Academy of Sciences to continue to enhance the GMO policy.

For customers who want to avoid GMOs, Food Lion offers Nature's Promise products. None of Food Lion's Nature's Promise items (organic or non-organic) include any intentionally added GMOs. Food Lion also offers products that are non-GMO certified by a third party. Food Lion does not knowingly sell animal products derived from genetically modified protein sources, including salmon, and does not plan to carry these products in the future.

Animal Welfare

Food Lion recognizes the importance of ensuring healthy farm animal welfare practices. Food Lion will not tolerate animal abuse and supports the globally recognized "[Five Freedoms](#)" of animal welfare.

Under the new farm animal welfare policy, Food Lion expects suppliers of whole or single ingredient cattle products, whole pork products, whole or single ingredient poultry products and other whole or single-ingredient products derived from farm animals to have an established publicly-facing animal welfare policy, report annually that they meet animal welfare acceptable levels of assurance and disclose progress through an annual animal welfare assessment and provide adequate training in their native language to all individuals involved with the direct handling of animals throughout the supply chain.

The animal welfare policy also addresses the following key areas:

- **Animal testing:** Food Lion does not support the testing of private brand food, pharmaceutical or cosmetic products and their ingredients on animals; nor does it ask suppliers of private brand products to conduct animal testing, unless there is a legal obligation.
- **Antimicrobials:** Food Lion supports the judicious use of antimicrobials on farm to help sick and injured farm animals with a veterinarian's oversight. Food Lion does not support the use of antimicrobials medically crucial to humans nor the prophylactic use of antimicrobials in animal farming.
- **Broiler Chickens:** Food Lion recognizes concerns related to growth size and rate and stocking density of chickens raised for meat production and is actively speaking with suppliers, stakeholders and animal welfare experts to develop a set of product standards related to breed, stocking density and enriched environments and examining science-based studies to

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make updates to the animal welfare policy.

- **Confined housing systems:** Food Lion has committed to working with suppliers to reach a 100 percent cage-free shell egg assortment by 2025 or sooner. Food Lion understands there are several confinement concerns linked to gestation stalls for breeding pigs or sows, and the companies are asking pork suppliers to transition to group housing and eliminate the use of gestation stalls by 2025 or sooner.
- **Growth hormones:** Food Lion sells only private brand milk products free of the artificial growth hormone rBST/rBGH. Additionally, the Food Lion offers Nature's Promise free from meat that prohibits the use of hormones and growth stimulants.
- **Pain management:** Food Lion expects suppliers of fresh and frozen products derived from whole or single ingredient cattle, pork, poultry and other whole or single-ingredient products derived from farm animals to have written policies detailing best practices for managing painful procedures to reduce suffering.

The animal welfare policy applies to all suppliers. Food Lion will begin working toward compliance with private brand suppliers and work with all suppliers to improve compliance throughout the total assortment of whole or single ingredient products by 2025.

Ahold Delhaize USA companies will begin annual reporting on the areas covered by the animal welfare policy beginning in 2021.

Food Lion will continue to enhance its sustainability policies over time that align with its commitment to caring for its neighbors.

About Food Lion

Food Lion, based in Salisbury, N.C., since 1957, has more than 1,000 stores in 10 Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic states and employs more than 77,000 associates. By leveraging its longstanding heritage of low prices and convenient locations, Food Lion is working to own the easiest full shop grocery experience in the Southeast, anchored by a strong commitment to affordability, freshness and the communities it serves. Through Food Lion Feeds, the company has donated more than 500 million meals to individuals and families since 2014 and has committed to donate 1 billion more meals by 2025. Food Lion is a company of Ahold Delhaize USA, the U.S. division of Zaandam-based Ahold Delhaize. For more information, visit www.foodlion.com.

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