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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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QAI Responds to False Claims of the Cornucopia Institute

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – The Cornucopia Institute has improperly and wrongfully impugned the certification practices of Quality Assurance International, Inc. (“QAI”) based solely on certification decisions made by a different accredited certifier. Contrary to the spin asserted by the Cornucopia Institute, QAI has not been accused of any wrongdoing by the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) Agriculture Marketing Service (“AMS”), and there is no suggestion by the USDA that QAI did anything wrong in its certification activities. In its formal complaint filed with the USDA, the Cornucopia Institute simply is trying to capitalize on a Consent Agreement entered into by the USDA and Aurora Organic Dairy (“AOD”).

The formal complaint is completely disingenuous about a Consent Agreement between AOD and the USDA, implying that it questions the certification decision of QAI when it clearly does not. While QAI does certify AOD’s Dublin, Texas farm, the consent agreement does not mention non-compliances at the Dublin, Texas facility or improper certification decisions made by QAI. QAI followed and applied all National Organic Program (“NOP”) regulations, including but not limited to verifying that all suppliers to AOD had a valid certification from an accredited certifier. By law, QAI is required to accept all certification decisions of other accredited certifiers. (NOP 202.501 General Requirements for Accreditation. (a)(13. "Accept the certification decisions made by another certifying agent accredited or accepted by USDA, pursuant to NOP.500").

“QAI must rely on the certification decisions of other certifying agents, and QAI acted appropriately as required by law,” said David Abney, general manager of QAI. “It is unfortunate that QAI has to now correct these misleading allegations and that the Cornucopia Institute failed to properly investigate these issues prior to releasing these claims to the public.”

The formal complaint also alleges that QAI acted inappropriately when a statement of Mr. Abney appeared in an AOD press release before the Consent Agreement was known to QAI and/or otherwise became public. In that statement, Mr. Abney merely explained



that QAI stood by its certification decisions. That statement was true then (before knowing about the Consent Agreement), and it still remains true today. QAI stands by its certification decisions, and nothing in the Consent Agreement even remotely questions those decisions.

“QAI is charged with the mission to protect the interest of farmers and consumers by verifying that organic integrity is upheld and that applicable regulations are followed,” said Mr. Abney. “QAI complied with all regulations and is confident that the Cornucopia complaint against QAI will be dismissed.”

QAI will continue to work closely with the USDA to make sure that AOD’s facilities certified by QAI remain in compliance with the NOP and stands ready to enforce any new pasture requirements once adopted by the USDA.

Since 1989, QAI has been providing independent, third party organic certification services to the organic food industry. As a USDA-accredited certifying agent, QAI will continue to deliver excellent organic certification services and support its certification decisions and clients if these decisions are ever questioned. QAI takes its commitment to providing independent, third party certification very seriously. QAI’s accredited and audited certification process ensures that each link in the supply chain meets USDA NOP regulation.

Quality Assurance International (QAI, Inc.), the global leader in certification services, has operations in the U.S., Canada, Japan and the European Union. Clients include agricultural producers, food processing facilities, integrated manufacturing operations and contract packing operations, traders, distributors, retailers, and other unique food operations. QAI’s programs are designed to verify compliance at every link of the product handling chain, thus assuring consumers that product integrity is preserved in the marketplace. For further information about QAI, visit the company’s website at www.qai-inc.com.