



United Egg Producers

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LAWSUIT IS “FRIVOLOUS, FALSE AND UNFOUNDED” SAY EGG PRODUCERS

ATLANTA - The lawsuit filed last week by the animal rights activist group Compassion Over Killing (COK) is “completely frivolous, false and unfounded” say the two organizations who were targeted.

United Egg Producers (UEP), a trade association representing most U.S. egg farmers, and ISE America, one of UEP’s member companies, say that they have completed an investigation into the allegations made by COK last week regarding potential consumer fraud over use of an old logo. They found no basis for consumer deception and called COK’s actions “simply a publicity stunt to promote its own vegan political viewpoint,” said Gene Gregory, president of UEP. “Unfortunately, COK’s actions will come at the expense of taxpayers who will have to pay the costs associated to adjudicate this matter, and clog an already overcrowded judicial system,” he added

“Neither ISE nor UEP have even been legally served with a notice of this lawsuit,” Gregory added “COK chose to announce it to the news media first, which just shows that their real intent is simply publicity for themselves. Unfortunately, the media were complicit with COK’s tactics before waiting for us to investigate and report on the allegations.”

Gregory said that UEP offered and received approval from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to change the industry’s animal welfare logo to “United Egg Producers Certified” on new egg cartons manufactured on or after November 30, 2005. ISE America changed its egg carton labels in November, 2005 replacing the old Animal Care Certified logo with the United Egg Producers Certified logo. The UEP Certified logo indicates that the eggs are produced under strict scientific animal husbandry guidelines and subject to independent third-party inspection.

The ISE egg cartons that are being challenged carry the UEP Certified logo on the outside top of the egg carton which is most visible to consumers when they make their egg purchases in grocery stores. The UEP Certified logo includes a website (www.uepcertified.com) which consumers can visit to see a complete description of the guidelines and other information about egg production methods.

Through the investigation undertaken by ISE and UEP, it was discovered that one of the ISE brand labels, representing about 1.25 percent of all the eggs sold at the farm, carried **both** the UEP Certified logo on the **outside** top of the egg carton and the old Animal Care Certified logo and old website on the **inside** of the egg carton lid beginning in 2007. This occurred as the result of a label printing error by a label supplier. The label supplier has admitted that it inadvertently and without the knowledge of ISE used an outdated printing plate and is correcting its printing plates. ISE already has removed the cartons that carry the dual logos from the marketplace and replacing them with cartons that only carry the UEP Certified logo.

Neither ISE nor UEP had been notified by any consumers regarding the use of the old logo until COK’s announcement last week. If consumers had noticed the old logo and tried to visit the old website they would have been automatically re-directed to the new and correct website (www.uepcertified.com).

“I guess it’s just an indication of our times that some people will file a lawsuit over something that clearly was a very minor mistake that caused no one any harm, and did not mislead anyone. It’s just a shame that

our taxpayer dollars and overburdened court system are being used by animal rights groups like this to promote their own political agendas,” Gregory said.

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UEP developed the UEP Certified program for modern egg production out of scientific guidelines established by an independent advisory committee of the top animal welfare scientific experts in the U.S. The USDA, the Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission have approved the UEP Certified logo. The International Egg Commission has recognized the program as a model from which to create animal welfare programs in other member countries throughout the world. In addition, the Food Marketing Institute and the National Council of Chain Restaurants also endorse these guidelines. To view a complete copy of the UEP Certified Guidelines and to learn more about the program visit www.uepcertified.com.