



For Immediate Release

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**U.S. Honey Certification Program Joins Sen. Bob Casey
in Calling for Honey Standard of Identity**

Washington, D.C. – March 26, 2015 – The True Source Honey Certification™ Program (www.TrueSourceHoney.com) commends Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) for his action last week calling on the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to establish a federal standard of identity for honey, and echoes his plea for such a standard to be executed quickly to help protect U.S. beekeepers and honey producers from the continuing threat of illicitly sourced honey and false honey products.

While many of Americans' most basic food staples – from butter and milk to mayonnaise and maple syrup – have federal definitions to protect consumers from fraudulent products, honey still does not have such a federal standard, despite repeated requests for almost a decade by U.S. beekeepers and others. Late last year the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sent a report to the FDA, as required by the 2014 Farm Bill, which summarizes comments received on the issue of creating a federal standard; according to the American Beekeeping Federation, 90% of the comments supported the establishment of a federal standard.

“We believe that setting a federal definition for honey could support enforcement and compliance efforts in the face of continuing efforts by some bad actors to trade in illegally sourced and sometimes mislabeled honey or imitation honey,” said True Source Honey Executive Director Gordon Marks. Marks noted that some illegally traded honey is found to contain added syrups or sweetener extenders.

As recently as January 2015, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement reported that agents had just seized almost half a million pounds of illegally imported Chinese honey valued at \$2.45 million destined for U.S. consumers. Customs officials have been working for years to crack down on illegal trade in Chinese honey, activity that True Source Honey estimates is costing U.S. taxpayers up to \$100 million a year in lost duties and is threatening the U.S. honey industry –

from beekeeper to packer – by undercutting fair market prices and damaging honey's reputation for quality and safety.

“A federal standard of identity would protect producers and consumers across the nation from substandard or falsely labeled honey,” Casey states in his letter to FDA.

A federal standard would be a helpful enforcement tool, but would not replace the need for a honey source-certification program, Marks said. The True Source Certification Program is an industry-supported, voluntary program that has been applauded by U.S. beekeepers and honey industry leadership because it provides traceability from hive to table, helping ensure the food safety and security of the honey used in North America. Companies that are True Source Certified now represent about one-third of honey sold in North America.

The True Source Certified™ logo on honey packages ensures that the source of the honey has been independently certified through a third-party audit system. Further information, including a search function to check honey products, can be found at www.TrueSourceHoney.com.

The text to Sen. Casey's letter can be found [here](#).

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***True Source Honey, LLC** is an effort by a number of honey companies and importers to protect consumers and customers from illegally sourced honey; and to highlight and support legal, transparent and ethical sourcing. The initiative seeks to help maintain the reputation of honey as a high-quality, highly valued food and further sustain the U.S. honey sector. Visit www.TrueSourceHoney.com. Follow us on [Facebook](#).*