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U.S. Patent & Trademark Office Bolsters Protection of Common Food Names

ARLINGTON, VA – The Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN), U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC), National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), North American Meat Institute (NAMI), National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) commend the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) for a new [examination guide](#) published on Friday that will help ensure that generic terms are given adequate consideration and protection.

The new improvements are contained within an examination procedure that guides USPTO trademark examining attorneys to inform their review of applications. The revision significantly clarifies and improves review procedures for certain trademarks related to cheese or meat names, creating a more consistent process that will protect the interests of manufacturers, farmers and consumers of common food terms such as parmesan and bologna.

“The U.S. remains the preeminent leader on intellectual property (IP) rights and, given the critical importance of safeguarding the rights of consumers and other stakeholders in a balanced IP system, sets a global example for a system that fairly protects truly distinctive products and common name goods alike. This recent step further deepens U.S. leadership in this arena,” said CCFN Executive Director Jaime Castaneda.

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