THE VEGAN TRADEMARK CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

ABOUT THE TRADEMARK

The Vegan Society, established in 1944, is the original vegan organisation and the originator of the term "vegan." In 1990, it introduced the Vegan Trademark to help make vegan products more accessible and to provide consumers with a reliable and transparent labelling system.

The Vegan Trademark can be applied to any product that fully complies with these Certification Standards.

The Vegan Trademark is not an environmental or eco certification and does not assess the environmental impact or sustainability of a product or service

DEFINITIONS

Animal

For the purposes of these standards, "animal" refers to the entire animal kingdom. This includes all vertebrates and multicellular invertebrates. The term may refer to species or individuals and is generally used to refer to non-human animals.

Vegan

Veganism is a philosophy and lifestyle that seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of and cruelty to animals for food, clothing, or any other purpose. It also promotes the use and development of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, humans, and the environment. In dietary terms, it entails avoiding all products derived wholly or partly from animals.

INGREDIENTS

The development and/or manufacture of a product and its ingredients must not involve or have involved the use of any animal product, by-products, or derivatives.

ANIMAL TESTING

The manufacture and/or development of the products registered with the Vegan Society and their ingredients do not involve and have not involved testing of any sort on animals (this includes testing for efficacy, toxicity, safety, cosmetic purposes and any animal tests required by law in any territories) conducted at the initiative of the company or on its behalf, or by parties over whom the company has effective control.

AUDITING

Every product registered with the Vegan Trademark will be independently audited by The Vegan Audit Company (audits@vegan-audit.com) against The Vegan Society's Standards. The audit includes an evaluation of ingredients, raw materials, processing aids, animal testing and cross-contamination.

Applicants must ensure full supply chain transparency and provide traceability documentation when requested.

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SITE AUDITS

Site or virtual audits may be conducted for food service providers including restaurants, cafés and catering operations.

CROSS CONTAMINATION

Trademark holders are required to minimise the risk of cross-contamination from animal-derived substances as far as is reasonably practicable.

- A maximum threshold of 100ppm of animal-derived contamination is permitted.
- Equipment and surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned prior to use in vegan product manufacturing.
- Employees must be adequately trained in cross-contamination procedures.

Note: The Vegan Trademark is not an allergen certification and may be used alongside appropriate "may contain" warnings.

FARMING AND HARVESTING METHODS

While most general farming practices (e.g. fertiliser use) are currently outside the Vegan Trademark's scope, specific exclusions apply:

- The use of live animals in farming (e.g. truffle hunting with pigs or dogs) is not permitted.
- Biodynamic farming methods involving animal bones body parts are not accepted.

BIO-NAPHTHA

Ingredients produced from biomass, biogas or bio naphtha using animal by-products do not meet the Trademark Standards

PACKAGING

Packaging must not contain any animal-derived materials. Examples include beeswax, animal leather and gelatine-based adhesives. Products packaged using animal-derived materials are not eligible for certification.

MISUSE

The Vegan Trademark is the intellectual property of The Vegan Society. Any unauthorised or misleading use is treated as a serious infringement.

- The Vegan Society investigates all reports of misuse or non-compliance.
- Certification may be suspended or revoked following

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOS)

GMO-derived ingredients must not have involved the use of animal genes or animal-derived substances during development or production.

CLARITY AND CONSUMER COMMUNICATION

Trademark holders must ensure the Trademark is displayed in a clear and non-misleading manner in line with our Trademark Usage Guidelines. All statements made in conjunction with the Trademark must be accurate and consistent with the certified status of the product.

EXPIRATION AND RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION

Certification is granted for a fixed term of 12 or 24 months, upon expiry of the licence, the licence must be renewed to continue using the Trademark.

ONGOING COMPLIANCE, PRODUCT UPDATES AND REFORMULATIONS

All products and their ingredients are required to pass the audit process before the Trademark can be used on packaging or marketing materials. On-going compliance checks at renewal are mandatory and any changes to ingredients, suppliers, or manufacturing processes must be disclosed to The Vegan Audit Company for re-approval before continued use of the Trademark.

PRECISION FERMENTATION

Products produced using precision fermentation may be eligible for registration with the Vegan Trademark. All precision fermentation products must comply with the Vegan Trademark's dedicated Precision Fermentation Usage Guidelines in addition to the standard eligibility requirements. Applicants should also refer to the Precision Fermentation FAQs for further information and guidance.