

Animal Diet Claims on Food Labels



Animal diet claims on food product labels refer to what type of feed an animal eats during its lifetime, except for milk fed prior to weaning. The Food Safety Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees these claims.

Grass Fed or 100% Grass Fed

Animals consume only forage with the exception of milk prior to weaning. They are never given grain or grain byproducts and are allowed access to pasture during the growing season.



Grass Finished

Animals may be fed grain during their lifetime and only fed grass/forage just before harvest.

Forage: Grass or hay, legumes, vegetation, immature cereal grain crops
Grain: The seeds of cultivated cereals such as corn and wheat

Grain Fed

"Conventional" system animals are fed grain from weaning to harvest. Many are on pasture for 6+ months and finished on grain prior to harvest.



Vegetarian Diet

Only vegetable feeds and no animal products or by-products such as blood meal or bone meal are fed. Claim may include stated exemptions such as "after 8 weeks" or after weaning from mother's milk.

Examples of label claims:

- Raised Using Vegetarian Feeds
- All Vegetarian Fed
- Fed No Animal By-Products

Organic Diet

USDA certification that can be applied to forage or grain fed products.

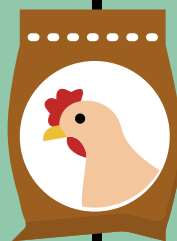
Livestock are raised under organic management standards (from last third of gestation), not administered antibiotics or growth hormones, fed organic feed only, at least 30% of ruminant animal forage needs met through pasture, meat is processed by certified organic processors.

Non-GMO Diet

Animals are fed a diet free of genetically engineered crops.

Omega-3 Enriched

Animals are fed diets high in Omega-3 fatty acids. Common sources of Omega-3 fatty acid feeds include flaxseed, fish oil, fish meal, safflower oil, linseed, rapeseed products and algae.



Soy Free

Soy free animal diets do not contain soy products such as soybeans or soybean meal.

For more information, visit MSU Extension's Food Label Claims page

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/tag/food-label-claims>

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