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**ONE PERCENT IS NOT ENOUGH: KASHI CHAMPIONS NEW APPROACH TO BOOST ORGANIC FARMLAND**  
*Kashi announces pioneering Certified Transitional protocol and launches first Certified Transitional product*

**SOLANA BEACH, Calif., May 17, 2016**—*Kashi*® believes that, together, we can increase access to organic foods. Today, the company announced a first-of-its-kind, collaborative effort to increase organic farmland by recognizing “organics in training” and supporting farmers transitioning fields from conventional to organic practices. The effort is grounded in a brand new protocol called **Certified Transitional** – and *Kashi*’s new Dark Cocoa Karma Shredded Wheat Biscuits cereal is the first product to feature a Certified Transitional ingredient.

According to the USDA, consumer demand for organic foods has grown by double-digits every year since the 1990s – but organic acreage has not kept up. Today, only about one percent of US farmland is organic and farmers looking to transition to organic face real barriers, including shouldering financial uncertainty during the three year transition period required to be eligible for USDA Organic certification.

“The health of people and the health of our planet are inextricably linked,” said David Denholm, CEO at *Kashi*. “One percent organic acreage is just not enough – and we want to promote solutions that benefit *everyone* working to move organic farming forward. We believe championing farms in transition will make organic foods more accessible and support a more sustainable food system – for all of us.”

Inspired to play a role in boosting organic acreage beyond one percent, *Kashi* partnered with leading organic certifier Quality Assurance International (QAI)<sup>1</sup> to create a way to recognize “organics in training” – crops grown on farmland in the process of transitioning from conventional to organic practices. QAI led the development of the **Certified Transitional** protocol, with input from Hesco/Dakota Organic Products, agricultural suppliers, a global environmental NGO, organic experts, farmers, retailers, distributors and food brands.

### **The Challenge**

“Transitioning to organic isn’t easy – farmers must invest in new infrastructure, create new business plans, and even obtain new crop insurance and financing. That all starts day one when they begin converting to organic, but they don’t see the financial benefit of organic prices for three years,” said Brad Hennrich, President at Hesco/Dakota Organic Products, a specialty grain company. “Certified Transitional provides a revenue opportunity and roadmap for farmers looking to transition that simply didn’t exist before.”

### **Getting to Solutions**

*Kashi* purchased the first-ever crop of Certified Transitional ingredients – hard red winter wheat – for use in Dark Cocoa Karma Shredded Wheat Biscuits, a new *Kashi* cereal created to showcase transitional ingredients. By contracting the transitional wheat at a price above the conventional market rate, *Kashi* is

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<sup>1</sup> QAI, an independent certification organization and leading USDA-accredited organic certifying body, which developed and will manage and own the Certified Transitional protocol.



working to create a marketplace that recognizes the investment farmers make while transitioning to organic practices.

“**Certified Transitional** connects farmers, processors, brands and consumers together in a virtuous cycle that supports the transition of more acreage to organic practices,” said Sarah Krol, Global Managing Director, QAI, Inc., an NSF International company. “For the first time, brands can offer Certified Transitional products to consumers which in turn allows consumers to support farmers as they transition fields to organic – we hope to see many more Certified Transitional products on shelves.”

“I transitioned some of my farmland to organic in the past and experienced the financial burden and uncertainty firsthand. Certified Transitional changes the equation and makes the decision to go organic easier,” said Newton Russell. Russell is one of two farmers who piloted the Certified Transitional protocol and grew the wheat featured in the first batch of Dark Cocoa Karma Shredded Wheat Biscuits.

QAI’s Certified Transitional protocol can be applied to any farmland growing any crop – from wheat to strawberries or cotton – and any brand using agricultural ingredients can incorporate Certified Transitional sourcing.

#### **Let’s #GoTogether toward More Organics**

“We couldn’t be more excited about the potential of Certified Transitional to lower barriers and increase organic production in the U.S.,” said CEO David Denholm. “To really reach that potential, we need more farmers, processors, and brands to get on board. We encourage any brand that relies on agricultural ingredients to explore Certified Transitional sourcing.”

*Kashi*, along with QAI, invites anyone interested – from farmers to consumers – to learn more about Certified Transitional.

- New *Kashi* Dark Cocoa Karma Shredded Wheat Biscuits will be available at select grocers and natural food retailers nationwide in early June. For more information, visit <http://www.Kashi.com/Transitional>
- Visit QAI’s [website](#) for general information on Certified Transitional.
- Any eligible farmer growing any crop can explore the Certified Transitional protocol. Please contact QAI at [gai@qai-inc.com](mailto:gai@qai-inc.com) for more information.
- Hesco/Dakota Organic Products is working to connect Certified Transitional crops to appropriate processors. Please contact [hescoinc@hesco-inc.com](mailto:hescoinc@hesco-inc.com) for more information.

#### **Share Certified Transitional Today!**

- **Click to Tweet:** Let’s #GoTogether toward more organic farmland! @KashiFoods @QAI\_Cert #DarkCocoaKarma
- **Click to Tweet:** New protocol from @QAI\_Cert supported by @KashiFoods helps farmers transition to #organic.
- **Click to Tweet:** Only 1% of US farmland is #organic today. @KashiFoods is working to change this. #GoTogether



### ***About Kashi Company***

Kashi believes eating more plants is the catalyst for a healthier life. A natural lifestyle pioneer since 1984, Kashi produces nutritious plant-based foods including cereals, powders, entrees and snacks with curated ingredients that #gottogether. All Kashi products being made today – including its GOLEAN and Heart to Heart brands - are Non-GMO Project Verified and Kashi is proud to partner with QAI on the industry’s first Certified Transitional program, which recognizes crops in transition from conventional to organic. Kashi products are available nationwide in the U.S. and Canada. Kashi is based in sunny Solano Beach, Calif. To learn more, please visit [Kashi.com](http://Kashi.com), Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Kashi](https://www.facebook.com/Kashi), Twitter at <https://twitter.com/Kashifoods>, Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/kashi/> or YouTube at [www.youtube.com/user/Kashi](http://www.youtube.com/user/Kashi).

### ***About Hesco, Inc./ Dakota Organic Products***

Hesco, Inc. / Dakota Organic Products is a privately owned, specialty grain company with multiple locations. We provide high quality, super clean organic and conventional grain and grain related products for both the food and pet food industries. We specialize in the cleaning, milling, cracking, blending and packaging of organic and conventional grains as well as establishing and nurturing the supply chain necessary with specialty and organic products. Hesco is BRC/ GFSI certified, FDA-registered, USDA and QAI certified Organic, and OU certified Kosher.

We are proud of our [history](#) and the many [milestones](#) we've accomplished. We look forward to a bright future with you. Safe, quality food starts with Hesco.

### ***About QAI (Quality Assurance International)***

Founded in 1989, QAI is the leading provider of organic certification services verifying organic integrity throughout the supply chain ([qai-inc.com](http://qai-inc.com)). Additional certification services include gluten-free, kosher, natural personal care, and food safety through its parent company NSF International. QAI remains dedicated to the environment, while providing educational outreach to the organic community, customers and consumers. Headquartered in San Diego, Calif., the company has grown to include operations in the U.S., Canada, Latin America, Japan and the European Union.

For media interested in more information or to request an interview with Sarah Krol, Global Managing Director, QAI, an NSF International company contact Liz Nowland-Margolis at [media@nsf.org](mailto:media@nsf.org) or +1 734-418-6624.

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