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**Backyard Farms Obtains GLOBALG.A.P. Harmonized Produce Safety Standard Certification
with Quality Certification Services**
Maine tomato grower first to earn distinction

(GAINESVILLE, Fla. – June 16, 2015) – Quality Certification Services (QCS) announced today that Backyard Farms, New England’s largest year-round grower of tomatoes, has become the first grower ever to obtain GLOBALG.A.P. Harmonized Produce Safety Standard (HPSS) certification, the newest food safety standard operated by GLOBALG.A.P that combines the United Fresh Produce GAPs Harmonization Initiative’s “Field Operations and Harvesting” and “Post-Harvest Operations” Standards.

The produce industry, retailers, certification bodies, universities and federal agencies in the United States, together with collaboration from GLOBALG.A.P., have made the HPSS the newest food safety standard operated by GLOBALG.A.P.

“We have always been committed to food safety since Day One and GLOBALG.A.P. HPSS certification is an example of this,” said Mark Queenan, Director of Quality Assurance and Food Safety at Backyard Farms. “Our associates at Backyard Farms have made this certification possible by embracing food quality and safety as a cornerstone of our corporate culture. Their dedication and vision have enabled us to attain the high quality levels that we have today and provide confidence and peace of mind to our customers when they purchase Backyard Farms tomatoes.”

GLOBALG.A.P. is a Global Food Safety Initiative recognized standard that assures customers of a company’s good agricultural practices for food safety and environmental management practices. It is the world’s leading farm assurance program, translating consumer requirements into Good Agriculture Practice in a rapidly growing list of countries – currently more than 110 worldwide.

Backyard Farms is currently the only GLOBALG.A.P. certified-producer with valid HPSS and Produce Safety Standard (PSS) certificates for the production of its tomatoes. Located in Madison, Maine, Backyard Farms operates 42 acres of greenhouse growing space that provides the northeast with fresh, locally grown Backyard Farms tomatoes year round.

For more information about QCS and GLOBALG.A.P., please visit the QCS website at www.qcsinfo.org or call 352.377.0133.

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About QCS

Quality Certification Services (QCS) offers USDA ISO Guide 65 and USDA National Organic Program accredited certification options for farming of crops, livestock, aquaculture, animal feed manufacturing, packing, handling and processing and wild harvest operations. As the largest certifier on the United States eastern seaboard, QCS meets the needs of operations regardless of type, location or size on the ever-expanding worldwide market. Florida Organic Growers, the parent organization of QCS, has been involved in promoting organic and food safety for more than 25 years. Find out more at www.qcsinfo.org.