



### **Choice Organic Teas Receives Gluten-Free Certification**

*All teas have been certified gluten-free by the Gluten Intolerance Group*

Seattle, WA (May 21, 2014) — Choice Organic Teas, the Original Organic Tea Company in the U.S. and the leading purveyor of exclusively organic teas, further advanced its dedication to quality and its commitment to the increasing number of customers with special dietary needs when it was certified gluten-free by the Gluten Intolerance Group earlier this month. Founded in Seattle in 1989, Choice Organic Teas has held purity, quality, and sustainability as its tenets and has subsequently led the industry as the first tea company to be Fair Trade Certified™ and Non-GMO Verified, in addition to being the pioneering organic tea company.

“Customers who are celiac or have gluten sensitivity can rest easy when choosing one of our products,” said Ray Lacorte, VP of Operations at Choice Organic Teas. “Consumers may not think about the potential for gluten contamination in their tea, but everything from packaging facilities to tea bags to additives within tea can contain gluten. It was important for us to receive this certification to give our customers additional peace of mind when choosing Choice Organic Teas.”

Most consumers are unaware that gluten can be an issue in the tea manufacturing process. While *Camellia sinensis*, the plant from which tea comes, does not contain any gluten on its own, manufacturers sometimes introduce gluten as an additive to tea products. For example, flavors made with grains containing gluten may be added to the tea. Barley malt can also be used as a sweetener and roasted barley itself can be made into tea. Some tea companies may use gluten-containing glue to close their tea bags, while the Choice Organic Teas’ bags are sewn shut.

“With an increasing number of customers concerned about gluten contamination in their diets, we are pleased to offer the added confidence of a third party verification from the Gluten Intolerance Group,” said Anne-Marie Phillips, Head of Sales and Marketing at Choice Organic Teas. “We are now part of more than 10,000 products produced in 15 countries verified as safe for gluten-free persons to consume. The GF logo on our products signifies the independent verification of product quality, integrity and purity.”

### **About CHOICE ORGANIC TEAS**

*A brand of Granum, Inc. of Seattle, CHOICE ORGANIC TEAS made its debut in 1989. As North America’s #1 selling exclusively certified organic tea line, Choice Organic Teas has promoted the growth and development of organic agriculture in tea estates worldwide and offers more than seventy-five varieties of teas and herbal infusions available in tea bags, tea pyramids, and loose leaf. In 2000, Choice Organic Teas became the first tea*

*crafters in the United States to offer Fair Trade Certified™ tea and in 2010, it became the first tea company to be Non-GMO Verified. Its commitment to sustainable business practices won it a Responsible Packaging Award in 2011. Choice Organic Teas is one of the few tea companies that packages its own tea, which gives it direct control over quality, food safety, and costs. And, since it is all packaged in the United States, it contributes to U.S. jobs. Visit [www.choiceorganicteas.com](http://www.choiceorganicteas.com) for more information.*