

What does USDA organic label really mean? WaPo investigation finds imported corn and soy often mislabelled

A shipment of 36 million pounds of soybeans sailed late [2016] from Ukraine to Turkey to California. Along the way, it underwent a remarkable transformation.

The cargo began as ordinary soybeans, according to documents obtained by The Washington Post. Like ordinary soybeans, they were fumigated with a pesticide. They were priced like ordinary soybeans, too.

But by the time the 600-foot cargo ship carrying them to Stockton, Calif., arrived in December [2016], the soybeans had been labeled “organic,” according to receipts, invoices and other shipping records. That switch — the addition of the “USDA Organic” designation — boosted their value by approximately \$4 million, creating a windfall for at least one company in the supply chain.

After being contacted by The Post, the broker for the soybeans, Annapolis-based Global Natural, emailed a statement saying it may have been “provided with false certification documents” regarding some grain shipments from Eastern Europe. About 21 million pounds of the soybeans have already been distributed to customers.

The multimillion-dollar metamorphosis of the soybeans, as well as two other similar grain shipments in the past year examined by The Post, demonstrate weaknesses in the way that the United States ensures that what is sold as “USDA Organic” is really organic.

Screen Shot at PM
Image information not available

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [The labels said ‘organic.’ But these massive imports of corn and soybeans weren’t.](#)