



[vafinest.com](http://vafinest.com)

# Trademark Manual

CREDIBILITY      RECOGNITION      STRENGTH

***Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup>***  
***Best of the Best***  
***Specialty Crafted Food & Drink***

**Congratulations on joining Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup>! Your specialty crafted food and drink marketing and promotional efforts are supported by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) Division of Marketing and Development. Together, we will promote the finest foods and drinks of the Commonwealth throughout local communities, across the country and around the world.**

The VDACS Division of Marketing and Development is eager to share this important trademark information with you. The success of the Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup> trademark depends on repeated recognition of the mark, which is increased and enhanced with consistent applications. We thank you for your strict adherence to these guidelines so that we can ensure continued growth and success of the program.

VDACS introduced the Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup> Trademark Program to help consumers know that they are purchasing top-quality Virginia-produced and processed products wherever they see the classic blue and red VA check mark logo. Since 1989, Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup> products have grown from local favorites to award-winning and internationally known foods and beverages.

To encourage sales, program participants are encouraged to print the trademark on Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup>-approved product labels, packaging, containers and signage. Use the trademark in advertising, but only in association with products that have earned the trademark designation. All Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup> products must meet the requirements of applicable regulating agencies and producers must adhere to the mutual agreements set forth in the [Virginia's Finest Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#). To further educate the public on the Virginia's Finest<sup>®</sup> program, link the logo to the program website, [www.vafinest.com](http://www.vafinest.com), whenever possible.



## **TRADEMARK REQUIREMENTS**

### **PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS**

The Virginia's Finest® trademark is used by authorized Virginia agricultural producers, processors, distributors, exporters and members of the retail food industry to identify quality Virginia products and to distinguish these goods from those of others. The trademark also allows these businesses to build a positive brand reputation through sales of these items.

The trademark is registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, the Virginia State Corporation Commission and the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As such, it can be used only with the express permission of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, as set forth in the Virginia's Finest® guidelines.

### **AUTHORIZED ARTWORK**

**Always use authorized artwork of the trademark when having it reproduced on printed materials.**

High resolution images, such as those that appear in an encapsulated postscript (EPS) file format, are typically used for printing purposes. Upon request, the Virginia's Finest® Administrator will provide the EPS files to approved Virginia's Finest® participants.

Low resolution images for electronic needs, such as websites and email, can be found on the [Virginia's Finest® website](#).

#### **✓ *Circle, Square, Horizontal Arrangements***

There are three approved trademark configurations available for use, with the circle image selected as the updated and refreshed mark. The square and horizontal marks are still available to program participants.

#### **✓ *Primary Slogan***

The primary slogan, Virginia's Finest®, is intended to complement any type of agricultural product, especially Virginia specialty crafted foods and drinks.

The primary slogan is typeset in Caxton Roman Bold, condensed 20%, and has the first letter of each word capitalized.



✓ **Color Information**

When the trademark is printed in its standard three-color application, the following ink specifications must be used:

Red	PMS 186
Blue	Reflex Blue
Black	Black

✓ **Prominence**

Position the trademark prominently to take advantage of its selling power. Keep the trademark isolated from all other words and designs.

✓ **Backgrounds**

Use the trademark on even backgrounds.

✓ **Design Elements**

Keep the trademark free from other design elements. The trademark is a design in itself and should be displayed in a distinguished manner. Use of the trademark in text online generally is not different from use of the trademark in print.

✓ **Domestic Use**

For domestic use, always use the trademark with the words, **VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE**, when size permits.

✓ **International Use**

For international use, always use the trademark with the words, **VIRGINIA, U.S.A.**

✓ **Customized Primary Slogan**

If desired, the slogan may be customized for use as an adjective on a particular product. This is achieved by adding the product name after the words, Virginia's Finest (ex: Virginia's Finest Sauce). When this is done, the product name must always follow the words Virginia's Finest. The words Virginia's Finest must never be preceded by any other words.

✓ **Secondary Slogan**

For certain promotions, it may be desirable to use a secondary slogan. When this is done, the secondary slogan must be clearly separated from the primary slogan and the trademark.



### **HISTORY OF THE DESIGN**

Introduced by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) in 1989, the Virginia's Finest® trademark was initially designed in a square format to create a buyer-motivating image for Virginia products, to provide easy recall and to increase consumer awareness of Virginia agricultural products. The resulting boost to Virginia's agricultural industry enhanced economic development in Virginia, which continues through present day.

The trademark design and accompanying slogan, Virginia's Finest®, were approved after extensive market testing to find what would be most appealing both to industry and to consumers.

The trademark design has a dual function: 1) the blue check suggests a passing grade and meeting quality standards; and 2) the check also serves as a "V," combining with the "A" to stand for Virginia and for Virginia Agriculture.

Research indicated that people perceived the check as an indication of quality and superiority. The research also showed that people easily recognized the check and the "A" as standing for Virginia Agriculture.

Testing on the best colors to use in the trademark showed that the red, white and blue color combination was perceived as bold and patriotic and as a sign of quality.

A refreshed circle version of the Virginia's Finest® trademark was introduced in the summer of 2017 in support of Virginia specialty crafted food and drink producers, who are the predominate users of the mark year-round. The updated logo includes more explanatory wording and with its circular look, signifies an actual "seal of approval." The original square-shaped logo is still acceptable.

### **SLOGAN**

Market research found that consumers preferred the slogan, Virginia's Finest®, above six other slogans that were tested; they felt that this suggests superior quality.

Further, the research indicated that consumers believed that products displaying the trademark were of higher quality than non-trademarked products.

The simplicity of Virginia's Finest® allows flexibility for development of sub-tag lines, such as Virginia's Finest® Sauces, Virginia's Finest® Peanuts or Virginia's Finest®-The Best of the Best. Additional emphasis can be given to the trademark by using the word "brand" after the mark.

Finally, the research showed that the trademark leads people to notice Virginia food and beverage products. Consumers indicated that they are more likely to select and purchase Virginia products if they are identified as Virginia's Finest®.



## **TRADEMARK USAGE GUIDELINES**

- ✓ The trademark must always be used in its entirety with all of the design elements: the circular pattern or the rectangular box, the registered trademark symbol ®, the check and the “A”, Virginia Agriculture and the primary slogan, Virginia’s Finest.
- ✓ The registered trademark symbol ® is required on the upper right hand corner on all versions of the trademark.
- ✓ The only exception to the above rules may be made when the trademark application is too small to make the words “Virginia Agriculture” legible. In this circumstance, “Virginia Agriculture” may be deleted.
- ✓ All primary and secondary slogans that are related to the trademark must be in proportion to the trademark as specified in this manual.
- ✓ The trademark may be used in circular, vertical or horizontal formats. Formats always must adhere to the proportion standards specified in this manual.
- ✓ The trademark may not be printed in only two colors, such as red and blue, red and black or black and blue. The trademark must be printed using all three specified colors (red, blue and black), or it may be printed in any one color or reversed out of any one color.
- ✓ When printing the trademark in one color or reversing it out of one color, there should be a small gap between the check and the letter “A.” This allows the check and the “A” to be more identifiable.
- ✓ If the trademark is printed in the standard three-color application, the check and the letter “A” should touch, leaving no gap, and should not overlap each other.
- ✓ In general, third parties may only use the logo in advertising, marketing collateral, or a website that references your connection to Virginia’s Finest®.