

COOL Facts!

The TRUTH about Country-of-Origin Labeling

- PRODUCERS, PROCESSORS, RETAILERS -

MYTH: Country-of-origin labeling doesn't really benefit farmers or ranchers in any major way.

FACT: Domestic producers deserve the right to distinguish their high quality U.S. products from imported ones. Without mandatory COOL, retailers will not be required to label U.S. products as such and the producers will not see any profit from the consumers that wish to buy local, fresh products and support the American producer.

COOL Opinion

Editorial: Tell Congress: It's no longer cool to stall COOL, Great Falls Tribune, January 11, 2007. *"In addition to being useful information for consumers, many in Montana's livestock industry believe domestic, if not Montana-grown, beef would be preferred by American consumers if they were given the option of choosing."*

MYTH: Retailers will be held liable and subject to \$10,000 fine for information given to them by suppliers regarding country-of-origin information.

FACT: Despite a number of non-compliant retailers, USDA has issued ZERO fines against a retailer for being out of compliance with seafood COOL. The current statute clearly states a fine will only be levied against those who knowingly and willingly violate the law.

Seafood COOL

*Mandatory seafood COOL is currently enforced and **the sky hasn't fallen!** Several states have also implemented their own state mandatory COOL laws, after being fed up with the federal government's refusal to enact national legislation, requiring retailers to identify country of origin for beef, pork, poultry and lamb products.*

MYTH: Third-party documentation and verification is required to be in compliance.

FACT: The law does not require third-party verification of origin for commodities or preclude self-certification of the origin of the commodity.

Organizations Speak Out!

On February 28, 2007 more than 200 organizations sent a letter to Congressional leadership urging an end to the prohibition on COOL implementation funds for USDA and requested a congressional directive that USDA immediately prepare a common-sense rule for implementation of mandatory COOL.

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