

## AMERICANS FOR COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING

June 6, 2005

Attn: Ag/Trade LA's

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to a provision in the fiscal year (FY) 2006 Agriculture Appropriations bill that prohibits the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from moving forward with the implementation of mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL) for meat and meat products.

Delaying the implementation of mandatory COOL for another year can be best characterized as the wrong move at the wrong time. There is no rationale for further delaying implementation of laws passed in the 2002 farm bill via the appropriations process, especially considering this measure has already been delayed far longer than necessary. A flood of imported food products continue to find their place on America's grocery store shelves, yet consumers have no way of distinguishing what is U.S. food products from imported products.

Our coalition of producers and consumers, who worked to pass this very popular law, remains united in seeing it implemented for all the covered commodities. Most recently, mandatory COOL for seafood was implemented by USDA and the sky hasn't fallen. The overestimated cost projections and purported bureaucratic burden are proving false. Congress should be helping, not hindering USDA to write common-sense implementation rules for COOL on the remaining commodities.

Country-of-origin labeling is designed to provide information to consumers and help U.S. producers promote their own products in the marketplace. Our nation's farmers, ranchers and seafood producers produce the best products in the world, and America's consumers want the ability to make informed decisions when purchasing food for their families. Recent cases of foodborne illness from imported food and the discovery of a case of mad cow disease in Washington State that was traced back to Canada only reinforce the need for consumers to be able to accurately identify the source of their food. Without mandatory COOL, consumers will be denied the ability to choose between U.S. and imported products and producers will be denied the opportunity to promote their superior products.

Please vote to strike the provision to prohibit USDA from implementing mandatory COOL for meat and meat products from the FY2006 agriculture appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Alabama Contract Poultry Growers Association  
Alabama Farmers Federation  
Alaska Farmers Union  
Alaska Longline Fishermen's Assoc.  
American Agriculture Movement Inc.  
American Corn Growers Association  
American Corn Growers Assoc. of Nebraska  
American Grassfed Association

American Meat Goat Association  
Arkansas Farmers Union  
California Dairy Campaign  
California Farmers Union  
Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment (IA)  
Campaign to Reclaim Rural America (MT)  
Carbon County Stockgrowers Association (WY)  
Cattle Producers of Washington

Center for Rural Affairs (NE)  
 Citizen Action Coalition (IN)  
 Citizen's for Health  
 Colorado Livestock Marketing Association  
 Connecticut State Grange  
 Consumer Federation of America  
 Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Foundation (OH)  
 Dakota Resource Council (ND)  
 Dakota Rural Action (SD)  
 Defenders of Wildlife  
 Farm Aid  
 Fed. of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund  
 Florida Farmers, Inc.  
 Go Wild Consumer Education Campaign (WA)  
 Great Plains Environmental Law Center (NE)  
 Heartland Center/Office of Peace and Justice for the  
     Diocese (IN)  
 Hispanic Farmers and Ranchers of America Inc.  
 Idaho Farmers Union  
 Idaho Rural Council  
 Illinois Farmers Union  
 Illinois Stewardship Alliance  
 Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska  
 Indiana Farmers Union  
 Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (MN)  
 Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement  
 Iowa Farmers Union  
 Kansas Cattlemen's Association  
 Kansas Farmers Union  
 Kansas National Farmers Organization  
 Kit Carson County Cattlemen's Association (CO)  
 Land Stewardship Project (MN)  
 Livestock Marketing Association  
 Michigan Farmers Union  
 Mid Nebraska Pride  
 Minnesota Citizens Organized Acting Together  
 Minnesota Farmers Union  
 Mississippi Livestock Markets Association  
 Missouri American Agriculture Movement  
 Missouri Farmers Union  
 Missouri Rural Crisis Center  
 Montana Agri-Women  
 Montana Cattlemen's Association  
 Montana Farmers Union  
 Montana National Farmers Organization  
 Montana Women Involved in Farm Economics  
 National Association of Counties  
 National Assoc. of Farmer Elected Committees  
 National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture  
 National Catholic Rural Life Conference  
 National Consumers League  
 National Family Farm Coalition  
 National Farmers Organization  
 National Farmers Union  
 National Grange  
 Nebraska Chapter of the Sierra Club  
 Nebraska Farmers Union  
 Nebraska Livestock Markets Association  
 Nebraska State AFL-CIO  
 Nebraska State Grange  
 Nebraska Wildlife Federation  
 Nebraska Women Involved in Farm Economics  
 Nebraskans for Peace  
 Nevada Committee for Full Statehood  
 Nevada Live Stock Association  
 New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association  
 New Mexico Federal Lands Council  
 New Mexico Wool Growers, Inc.  
 New York Beef Producers Assoc.  
 North Carolina Contract Poultry Growers Assoc.  
 North Dakota Farmers Union  
 North Dakota Livestock Marketing Association  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. (NY)  
 Northern Plains Resource Council (MT)  
 Ohio Farmers Union  
 Oregon Farmers Union  
 Oregon Livestock Producers Association  
 Organization for Competitive Markets  
 Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations  
 Paulson Livestock LLP (MT)  
 Pennsylvania Farmers Union  
 Pennsylvania State Grange  
 Platte County Farm Bureau (NE)  
 Powder River Basin Resource Council  
 Property Rights Research (OH)  
 Public Citizen  
 R-CALF United Stockgrowers of America  
 Reclaim Rural America, Inc. (MT)  
 Rocky Mountain Farmers Union  
 Rural Advancement Foundation International – USA  
 Rural Roots (ID)  
 Sierra Club National Ag Committee  
 South Dakota Farmers Union  
 South Dakota Sheepgrowers Association  
 South Dakota Stockgrowers Association  
 Southern Research and Development Corp, Inc (LA)  
 Southern Shrimp Alliance  
 Soybean Producers of America  
 Stillwater Range Association (MT)  
 Sustainable Earth  
 Texas Farmers Union  
 Utah Farmers Union  
 Washington Farmers Union  
 Western Colorado Congress  
 Western Organization of Resource Councils  
 Wisconsin Farmers Union  
 Women Involved in Farm Economics