

06/24/2003 Entry: "Coalition Urges House Appropriations Committee to Protect COOL"

WASHINGTON (June 23, 2003) – A coalition of more than 130 agriculture and consumer groups, representing an excess of 50 million Americans, urged the House Appropriations Committee today to shut down any attack on mandatory country-of-origin meat labeling.

In a letter to the House Appropriations Committee, Americans for Country-of-Origin Labeling criticized a recent House agriculture appropriations subcommittee proposal that would prohibit the U.S. Department of Agriculture from further implementing mandatory country-of-origin labeling for beef, pork, lamb or fish.

“This provision can best be characterized as the wrong move at the wrong time,” the letter stated. “USDA has not yet concluded its nationwide listening sessions to gather input concerning the regulations to implement mandatory country-of-origin labeling; therefore, pre-empting the process will only add to the confusion surrounding this provision.”

The letter explained that delaying the rule-making process only adds to heightened concerns by U.S. consumers and key trading partners regarding the recent discovery of mad cow disease in Canada. “Allowing the spending prohibition to remain in the appropriations bill may have the unintended consequence of jeopardizing both our domestic and foreign markets for meat and meat products, as well as causing the 2002 farm bill to be reopened,” the letter said.

“Our nation’s food producers provide the best commodities in the world, and our nation’s consumers want the ability to determine where their food is born, raised, and processed,” the coalition wrote.

“We believe that given a choice, consumers will choose U.S.-produced products,” said Art Jaeger, assistant director of the Consumer Federation of America. “Without mandatory country-of-origin labeling, consumers will be denied the ability to differentiate between U.S. and imported products.”

ACOL Coalition Members:

Alabama Farmers Federation
American Agriculture Movement, Inc
American Agriculture Movement of Arkansas
American Agriculture Movement of Oklahoma
American Corn Growers Association
American Corn Growers Assoc. of Nebraska

American Meat Goat Association
Arkansas Farmers Union
Baker County Livestock Association (OR)
Beartooth Stock Association (MT)
Bitter Root Stockgrowers Association
Bull Mountain Land Alliance (MT)
Burleigh County Farm Bureau (ND)
Calaveras County Cattlemen's Association (CA)
California Farmers Union
California National Farmers Organization
Campaign to Reclaim Rural America (MT)
Carbon County Stockgrowers Association (WY)
C.A.S.A. del Llano
Catfish Farmers of America
Center for Rural Affairs
Cochise-Graham Cattle Growers Assoc. (AZ)
Consumer Federation of America
Crazy Mountain Stockgrowers Association (MT)
Dakota Resource Council
Dakota Rural Action
Dawson Resource Council (MT)
Dunlap Livestock Auction
Eagle County Cattlemen's Association (CO)
Eastern Montana Angus Association
Fall River & Big Valley Cattlemen's Assoc. (CA)
Fillmore County Cattlemen's Association
Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Florida Fruit and Vegetables Association
Florida Tomato Exchange
Georgia Peanut Commission
Georgia Poultry Justice
Glacial Ridge Cattlemen's Association (MN)
Grant County Cattlemen's Association (WA)
Grant County Stockgrowers Association (OR)
Holy Cross Cattlemen's Association (CO)
Houston Co. Cattlemen's Association, Inc. (MN)
Idaho Farmers Union
Illinois Farmers Union
Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas
Indiana Farmers Union
Indiana National Farmers Organization
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Iowa Farmers Union
Just Food
Kansas Cattlemen's Association
Kansas Farmers Union

Kansas Hereford Association
Kemper County Farm Bureau (MS)
Kern County Cattlemen's Association, Inc. (CA)
Kit Carson County Cattlemen's Assoc.(CO)
Land Stewardship Project (MN)
Lincoln County Stockmans Association (CO)
Livestock Marketing Association
Madera County Cattlemen's Association (CA)
Malheur County Cattlemen's Association (OR)
McCone Agricultural Protection Org.(MT)
Merced-Mariposa Cattlemen's Assoc., CA
Michigan Farmers Union
Minnesota Farmers Union
Missouri Farmers Union
Missouri National Farmers Organization
Missouri Rural Crisis Center
Missouri Stockgrowers Association
Modoc County Cattlemen's Association (CA)
Montana Agri-Women
Montana Cattlemen's Association
Montana Farmers Union
Montana National Farmers Organization
Montana Stockgrowers' Association
National Assoc. of Farmer Elected Committees
National Catholic Rural Life Conference
National Consumers League
National Family Farm Coalition
National Farmers Organization
National Farmers Union
Nebraska Farmers Union
Nebraska Grange
Nebraska Women Involved in Farm Economics
Nevada Live Stock Association
New York National Farmers Organization
New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association
North Dakota Farmers Union
North Central Montana Stockgrowers Assoc.
Northern Plains Resource Council
Ohio Farmers Union
Oklahoma Farmers Union
Oregon Farmers Union
Oregon Livestock Producers Association
Organization for Competitive Markets
Park County Stockgrowers Association (MT)
Pennsylvania Farmers Union
Platte County Farm Bureau of Nebraska

Pocahontas County Cattlemen's Association (IA)
Powder River Basin Resource Council
Public Citizen
Pueblo County Stockmen's Association (CO)
R-CALF United Stockgrowers of America
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Rosebud Protective Association (MT)
Rural Roots (ID)
South Dakota Farmers Union
South Dakota Sheepgrowers Association
South Dakota Stockgrowers Association
South Texas Hereford Association
Southeast Wyoming Cattlefeeders
Southeastern Fisheries Association
Southeastern Montana Livestock Association
Southern Colorado Livestock Association
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation
Southern Sustainable Ag. Working Group
Soybean Producers of America
Sterling North Dakota Cattlemen's Weighing Assoc.
Stevens County Cattlemen's Association (WA)
Sustainable Earth
Texas Farmers Union
Union County Cattlemen's Association (OR)
Utah Farmers Union
Virginia Angus Association
Virginia Livestock Marketing Association
Washington Farmers Union
Way Out West Rural Action Group (ID)
Western Ranchers Beef Cooperative
Wisconsin Farmers Union
Wisconsin National Farmers Organization
WORC
Wyoming Stockgrowers Association

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