

## PRODUCT OF USA LABELING

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In July 2021, President Biden issued an executive order to make the economy more competitive. This included directing the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to clarify that meat can only receive a “Product of USA” label if it did, in fact, spend its entire life within the country’s borders. Under current voluntary labeling rules, meat can be designated a “Product of USA” if it is processed domestically, but born, raised, and/or slaughtered in another country. This misleading claim puts domestic producers at a competitive disadvantage while preventing consumers from making fully informed decisions about the products they buy.

According to recent surveys, the vast majority of Americans want to know where their food comes from, and farmers and ranchers want to provide them with that information. Laws should support farmers and consumers in achieving that goal—but multinational meatpackers and foreign competitors have fought fair and accurate labels for decades. This allows companies to import cheaper products from other countries and still make a premium from passing them off as local products which, in turn, depresses prices for local ranchers and undermines consumer confidence in labels.

While truthful and accurate voluntary labels are important to producers and helpful for consumers, they are not a replacement or substitute for mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) NFU has been a stalwart proponent of mandatory COOL for meat. NFU policy states that mandatory COOL “is a valuable marketing tool for producers, and it allows consumers to know where the meat products they consume are born, raised, slaughtered, and processed.” NFU also supports the mandatory COOL rules already in effect for other agricultural products, such as dairy, produce, honey, and nuts.

90%

of consumers want country of origin labels on meat.

### WHAT WE CAN DO:

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- ✔ Speak out in favor of new USDA rules that will make voluntary “Product of USA” labels truthful and meaningful.
- ✔ Encourage lawmakers to lead efforts to bring back mandatory COOL.