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(3)

FSIS Docket Clerk
Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service
Room 102 Cotton Annex Building
300 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

00-036A
00-036A-3
Danila B. Oder

Re: Docket #00-036A

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to comment on regulations that would define which cattle and beef products can be labeled as "Products of the U.S." I urge you to define this category as only those animals born, raised, and slaughtered in the United States.

1. It is misleading to consumers to allow "Product of the U.S." labeling for animals that are born in another country and live in the U.S. for as little as 100 days.
2. This loophole hurts U.S. ranchers and farmers who should benefit from the label.
3. This loophole decreases consumers' ability to know where their food is produced or to choose which products to buy based on concerns about safety, environmental, or labor standards in different countries.
4. This loophole contravenes the purpose of the label, which is to provide consumers with more information rather than less information.
5. Because of the documented Europe-wide spread of mad cow disease despite official precautions, a strict rather than a loose label is desirable from a public health point of view.

With the possible upcoming passage of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), bringing animals from across the hemisphere into the US becomes a real possibility. I urge you to use the strict definition: only those animals born, raised and slaughtered in the United States.

Sincerely,

