

September 28, 2001

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket #00-036A
Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service
Room 102 Cotton Annex Building
300 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

01 OCT 2001 11 7 AM

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00-036A 00-036A-214 Connie J. Ova

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the proposed rulemaking regarding the definition and labeling of U.S. cattle and beef products.

As a North Dakota beef producer and a consumer who is concerned about what I feed my family, I strongly support the definition of U.S. cattle and beef products for labeling purposes as "born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the United States." All other definitions mislead consumers and damage the integrity of the U.S. beef industry.

My husband, Dennis, and I own and operate a 300 head cow-calf enterprise and grain farm in central North Dakota. We have done so for 27 years now and hope to continue for the next 20 years. We hope to pass this business on to our son, should he wish to farm and ranch.

U.S. producers spend significant time, money, resources and energy in order to produce top quality livestock. Cattle and beef products that were born and partially raised in another country should not be labeled as a product of the U.S..

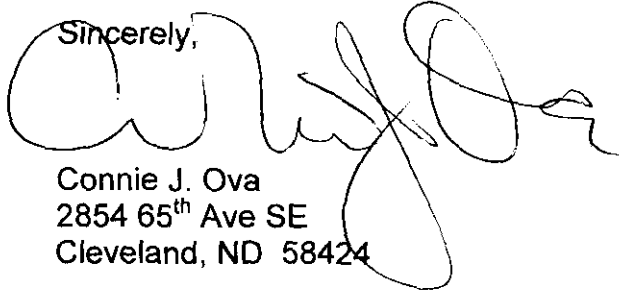
We buy clothes, cars and many other manufactured goods that bear the country-of-origin label; and yet, there is no requirement for country-of-origin labels for the food we feed to our families. As a matter of choice, many consumers may wish to purchase meat from animals born and raised in the United States.

I strongly support a mandatory labeling program with a uniform, consistent definition for domestic origin as born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the United States.

I oppose the petition submitted in September 2000, that would allow imported beef products to be fed in the U.S. for 100 days, processed in the United States and would receive a country of origin label, "Beef: Made in the U.S.A."

It is my hope that FSIS will implement meaningful labeling regulations for cattle and beef products. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Ova', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the right of the typed name and address.

Connie J. Ova
2854 65th Ave SE
Cleveland, ND 58424