

September 26, 2001

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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

00-036A
00-036A-24
Annette Loken

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To Whom It May Concern:

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

As an American consumer, 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.

I grew up on a small-family farm. We took pride in the quality of beef that we raised. Now as a consumer at the grocery store, I expect that if produce is labeled as U.S. Beef, that beef would have been in the United States from birth to slaughter. This is important on two fronts 1) to preserve the high-integrity reputation of American beef and 2) to support the American beef grower as he or she runs their business under some of the toughest guidelines in the world as far as medications that they can administer, types of feed, etc.

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..

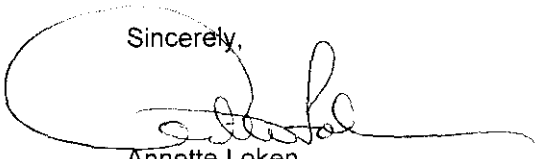
We buy clothes, cars and many other manufactured goods that bear the country-of-origin label; and yet, there is no requirement for country-of-origin labels for the food we feed to our families. As a matter of choice, many consumers may wish to purchase meat from animals born and raised in the United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



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