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FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION
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Agustin Fuentes

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8/31/01

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket No. 00-036A
Room 102 Cotton Annex Building
300 12th St. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-3700

RE: Use of the terms *Country of Origin*, *U.S. Cattle*, and/or *U.S. Fresh Beef* as it relates to foreign-born livestock.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am strongly opposed any legislation or rule making that will permit any foreign-born animal to be defined as or labeled with the *Country of Origin* (or the above terms) as the United States.

- "*Country of Origin*" (and/or the above terms) should only be defined by the USDA / FSIS to include animals **raised from birth** within the United States.
- Livestock, born outside of the United States, but raised and fed for part of it's life within the United States should **not** be allowed to be labeled with the *Country of Origin* (and/or above terms) as the United States.

Current proposals to allow foreign-born livestock to be labeled with the *Country of Origin* (and/or above terms) as the United States will:

1. Erode consumer confidence in "U.S." raised livestock.
2. Further erode consumer confidence in "Truth in Labeling" issues.
3. Damage the integrity of U.S. raised livestock as it relates to:
 - Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemic
 - B.S.E. (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy)
4. Create the potential for economic hardship for America's ranchers and small farms by allowing imported livestock to enter the U.S. and be labeled as being raised in the United States.

Therefore, I strongly urge you to oppose any legislation or rule making that would allow any meat from livestock born outside of the United States to be labeled with the *Country of Origin* (and or above terms) as the United States.

Respectfully Submitted,

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