



## FACT SHEET

### Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL)

**Issue Summary:** *The Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) law, first passed in 2002 and then refined in 2008, mandates that muscle cuts of meat and some vegetables, nuts and fruits sold at retail must contain a label informing consumers about the country where the product was sourced.*

- COOL is currently being challenged by Mexico and Canada in the World Trade Organization (WTO), and efforts bring COOL into compliance with WTO obligations are under way in Congress. Sens. John Hoeven, R-N.D., and Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., have introduced legislation that would put COOL in compliance with the WTO and maintain the integrity of country-of-origin labeling. Call your senators and urge them to support the Hoeven-Stabenow COOL bill. The U.S. Capitol switchboard is (202) 224-3121. Find out more about the Hoeven-Stabenow compromise: <http://www.nfu.org/the-cool-compromise>
- COOL provides consumers with information they care about. A May 2013 public opinion poll showed more than 90 percent of consumers support COOL.
- A recent study by the University of Arkansas shows that consumers use COOL to draw inferences related to a food product's safety, taste and freshness. It also found consumers prefer meat labeled from the U.S. The study is available at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022435915000299>
- COOL is strongly supported by America's farmers and ranchers, who are proud of what they produce.
- COOL does not restrict imports in any way. Instead, it informs consumers about where certain products were sourced and allows consumers to make informed decisions about the food they eat.
- According to a report by Robert Taylor, Ph.D., COOL has not had a significant negative effect on the price basis for imported cattle relative to domestic cattle. The full report is available on NFU's website at: <http://www.nfu.org/images/COOLReport1132015Final.pdf>
- Despite strong public support, the U.S. meat industry has tried to stop implementation of COOL, but those efforts have been rejected by U.S. courts on four separate occasions.