



November 5th, 2009

Dear Producer:

U.S. Mandatory Country of Origin Labelling (COOL) was implemented on September 30th, 2008 and the Final Rule came into effect on March 16th, 2009. Some U.S. processors have since limited or completely ceased purchases of Canadian swine, attributing this decision to COOL. The national pork and beef industries have been working to collect evidence of harm as a result of COOL and this information will aid in a potential World Trade Organization challenge. It is essential to gather additional evidence from industry stakeholders. If you have been or continue to be affected negatively by COOL legislation, please consider submitting any evidence you have compiled on the effects of COOL. Please contact me with any questions or follow up.

Background

The Canadian Government initially requested World Trade Organization (WTO) consultations for COOL in December 2008. On May 7th, 2009, the Government requested further consultations with the U.S. regarding COOL. Note that the initial request for consultations in December was in regards to the Interim Rule, whereas the latest request covered the Final Rule and a letter issued by Agriculture Secretary Vilsack asking processors to voluntarily comply with stricter COOL standards than what is outlined within the Final Rule. The Government took the next step in the WTO dispute settlement process on October 7th by requesting the formation of a dispute settlement panel. While the U.S. vetoed this first request for a dispute settlement panel, a second request cannot be vetoed. The Canadian Government has an opportunity to make a second request for a dispute settlement panel in mid-November 2009.

Kind regards,

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