
News Release

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Government of Canada Responds to U.S. Country-of-Origin Labelling Measures

The Government of the United States of America today published its final regulations for U.S. country-of-origin labelling (COOL). The Government of Canada recognizes provisions in the final rule that will help to level the playing field for Canadian producers and will strengthen the integrated North American livestock industry.

“I am pleased that key issues raised by Canada are addressed in these measures,” said the Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway. “Together with the provinces and industry, we will continue to assess the trade and market impact of this legislation. We have built a strong and durable trade relationship over the years with the United States and we must more than ever aggressively pursue this already robust relationship during these difficult economic times.”

“This government always stands up for Canadian livestock producers and that hard work is paying off as we protect and expand opportunities for our producers within the integrated North American beef industry,” said the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. “These final regulations will help to address the concerns we’ve consistently raised with our American counterparts, and we will continue to work with the U.S. to prevent any unfair harm to our industry.”

“The bottom line is that the changes to the final rule will help to keep livestock trade moving throughout the integrated North American market and will benefit producers, consumers and processors,” added Minister Day.

The final regulations will allow for more flexibility on labelling requirements in the U.S. for meat from animals of American and Canadian origin that are brought together during a production run. Canada has repeatedly raised concerns that COOL could impose unfair costs, especially on Canadian livestock producers, by requiring the segregation of Canadian animals.

Most recently, Canada and the U.S. held formal consultations under the World Trade Organization regarding the adverse impact of the interim regulatory measures on Canadian livestock and meat producers. Canada will continue to monitor the situation and defend Canadian producers through discussions and representations to the U.S. at all levels.

The U.S. and Canada are each other’s largest agricultural trading partners. In 2007, bilateral agricultural trade totalled \$32.3 billion.

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