

# ***ANALYSIS OF ESSB 5957***

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***House Agriculture & Ecology Committee***

***April 2, 1999***

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Creates a 14 member task force on food labeling to examine country-of-origin labeling and the feasibility of a Grown in Washington– promotional program.

***Background:***

*A rule of the Washington Fryer Commission requires all chickens commonly referred to as fryers, broilers, or fryer roasters that are offered for sale in this state to be labeled as to the state of origin. This rule took effect in 1957. (WAC 16-512-110(1).) The rule suggests, but does not require, that the label include an outline of the state of origin and provides as an example a "this FRYER grown in WASHINGTON" label on an outline of the state of Washington. (WAC 16-512-110(4).)*

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the U. S. Public Health Service samples individual lots of domestically produced and imported commodities and food products and analyzes them for pesticide residues to enforce the tolerances set by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. Although processed foods are included in the sampling, the emphasis is on unwashed, whole (unpeeled), raw agricultural commodities. Domestic samples are collected close to their point of production and import samples are taken at their point of entry into U. S. commerce. In 1997, a total of 9,843 samples were analyzed under this regulatory monitoring program: 4,501 were domestic and 5,342 were import food samples. Summaries of the results of the domestic samples and of the import samples are attached. (*Food and Drug Administration Pesticide Program: Residue Monitoring 1997*, pages 3 and 6.)

***Summary:***

A food labeling task force is created. It is made up of 14 members: 2 members of the House of Representatives, 2 members of the Senate, a representative of the Department of Agriculture, and 9 representatives of various elements of the food industry. The House members are

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appointed by the Co-Speakers of the House and the Senate members are appointed by the President of the Senate. The industry representatives are appointed by the Co-Speakers and the President.

The task force is to elect a chair and adopt rules for conducting its business. It is to examine: country of origin labeling for retail sales of agricultural products; and the feasibility of developing a "Grown in Washington" promotional program for agricultural products produced in this state.

The task force is to make its recommendations to the Legislature by December 10, 1999, and expires December 31, 1999. Its staff support is provided by the House and Senate.