
**Rural Development, Agriculture, &
Natural Resources Committee**

HB 2712

Brief Description: Requiring retailers to indicate the country of origin on beef sold to the public.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz, Riccelli, Maycumber, Lekanoff, Mosbrucker, Chopp, Walsh, Chapman, Harris, Blake, Dent, Pettigrew, Rude, Springer, Steele, Appleton, Caldier, Fitzgibbon, Leavitt, Eslick, Volz, Van Werven, Shea, Cody, Tharinger, Robinson, Young and Ormsby.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires beef retailers to indicate the country of origin on beef sold to the public.

Hearing Date: 1/29/20

Staff: Riley O'Leary (786-7296) and Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

Federal Labeling Requirements.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), through the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) regulation, requires retailers to provide their customers with information regarding the source of certain foods including muscle cuts and ground meat of lamb, goat, and chicken and fresh and frozen produce. Labeling of country of origin can be placed on a placard, sign, label, sticker, or any format that allows consumers to identify the country of origin of the product. In 2016, the USDA removed beef muscle cuts, pork muscle cuts, ground beef, and ground pork from the list of covered commodities subject to the COOL regulations. In 2017, venison muscle cuts and ground venison were added to the labeling requirement.

State Placard Regulations.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Stores or other businesses offering fresh fruits and vegetables for sale to consumers must display a placard that informs the consumer of where the product was grown. Placards are not required for fruits or vegetables that are grown outside of the United States or if the individual items have stickers or labels on them that indicate where the product was grown. The placard must either indicate that the product was grown in the United States or grown in Washington.

Summary of Bill:

Beef retailers must display a placard that is clearly visible and readily viewable by the public that indicates the country of origin of the beef product.

"U.S.A. beef" is beef derived exclusively from animals either:

- born, raised, and slaughtered exclusively in the United States; or
- born and raised exclusively in the United States and transported for not more than 60 days through any other country and slaughtered in the United States.

If the beef does not meet the criteria for "U.S.A. beef," then it must be labeled "imported" beef and indicate each country in which the animal was born, raised, and slaughtered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.