

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2369

AS OF FEBRUARY 17, 1992

Brief Description: Requiring salmon food fish to be labeled by its source and common name.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Spanel, R. King, Wilson, Basich, H. Sommers, Hochstatter, Morris, Fuhrman, Kremen, Orr, Haugen, Riley, Padden, R. Meyers, G. Cole, Sheldon, Bowman, Rasmussen and R. Johnson)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Hearing Dates: February 19, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Consumers in Washington State are protected under both state and federal law from mislabeled foods sold within the state. Under state law, false or misleading labels are generally defined as misbranding. Some food items, such as halibut and poultry, have provisions that specifically describe certain acts that constitute misbranding.

The Department of Agriculture is the state agency primarily responsible for implementation of provisions prohibiting misbranding. The department may issue an embargo of the food product involved or may seek an injunction through the Attorney General, restraining a person from violating misbranding provisions. Criminal penalties may also be sought against a violator. After conviction and upon another violation, a violator may also be subject to a maximum of 30 days in jail.

SUMMARY:

Any person that labels, advertises, or offers fresh or frozen salmon for wholesale or retail sale must identify the species of salmon by its common name as described in the bill, must identify whether the salmon is farm raised or commercially caught, and, if caught or raised in Washington, must indicate such.

Violations of these provisions constitute misbranding, except where a wholesaler or retailer who receives inaccurate information unknowingly identifies salmon species or origin inaccurately.

The Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Department of Fisheries, must establish reasonable identification standards for salmon and develop a method to administratively enforce provisions of the bill.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available