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February 24, 2021

United States President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Our January 25, 2021 letter applauded your “Made in America” Executive Order and explained that federal procurement programs should choose to purchase beef from cattle exclusively born, raised, and slaughtered in the U.S. to ensure U.S. cattle producers can benefit from your order.

More recently, a letter was sent to your Office of Federal Procurement Policy by the United States Cattlemen’s Association urging that 48 CFR § 470.103(d) be changed to allow a product derived from an animal to be considered “a product of the United States [if] that animal was born, raised, slaughtered *or further processed in the United States.*” (Emphasis added.)

We are deeply concerned this request will undermine your efforts to strengthen the domestic beef supply chain – the supply chain consisting of hundreds of thousands of mostly family-owned U.S. cattle operations. This is because allowing beef products from animals “further processed in the United States” to be considered products of the U.S. will incentivize corporate feedlots and packers to bypass cattle offered for sale by U.S. cattle producers in favor of importing lower-cost foreign cattle. This will limit marketing opportunities for U.S. cattle producers while empowering importers, whose foreign cattle are “further processed in the United States,” to nevertheless sell their beef under the brand of the U.S. cattle producer – the product of the United States brand.

Though dated, GAO Report No. GAO-03-780 (p. 20) reveals differing federal procurement rules for beef stating, e.g., the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s school meals programs and the Department of Defense’s Subsistence Prime Vender Program defines ‘domestic’ foods differently.

We urge you to harmonize among all federal beef procurement agencies a new standard that reserves all “product of the United States” declarations only for beef exclusively derived from animals exclusively born, raised, and slaughtered in the United States.

Sincerely,

Bill Bullard, CEO (406-670-8157) billbullard@r-calfusa.com

Cc: Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy