

Reinstate MANDATORY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING *for beef*

About

Today, beef imported from countries like Brazil, Australia, and Nicaragua can be sold in U.S. grocery stores under a "Product of USA" label, even if the animal was never born, raised, or harvested here.

In 2015, Congress repealed mandatory country of origin labeling (MCOOL) for beef. Since then, multinational packers have flooded the U.S. market with cheaper, undifferentiated foreign beef, squeezing American ranchers out of their own domestic market and driving family cattle operations out of business.

What MCOOL Does

- ✓ Requires all beef to be labeled where it was born, raised, and harvested.
- ✓ Empowers consumers to choose American beef, sending demand signals to packers.
- ✓ Ends deceptive labeling by banning "Product of USA" labels on foreign beef.
- ✓ Strengthens domestic production, encouraging expansion of the U.S. cattle herd.
- ✓ Supports rural America: 932,000 cattle farms and ranches represent nearly 40% of all U.S. farms.

**Include MCOOL in the Farm Bill.
Support the bipartisan American
Beef Labeling Act (S.421)**



86% of voters

support legislation that reinstates MCOOL for beef. Country of origin labels already exist for your t-shirt, coffee mug, fruits, veggies, etc. Beef and pork are the only major proteins excluded.



3.7 billion lbs of beef

America imports roughly 3.7 billion pounds of beef and 1.9 million cattle annually, about 22% of U.S. beef consumption. Relying on foreign sources undermines food security and leaves our supply chain vulnerable.



80% of market

Just four global packers control over 80% of the U.S. beef market. Without MCOOL, they, not consumers, decide where beef is sourced.



\$17 billion

In 2016, the year after MCOOL was repealed, U.S. cattle receipts fell \$17 billion, devastating rural communities. The latest census shows America has lost nearly 107,000 beef cattle farms and ranches in the five-year period 2017-2022 (over 21,000 a year).



Stop MANDATORY EID EARTAGS

The USDA finalized a rule mandating electronic identification (EID) ear tags for adult cattle and bison crossing state lines. This adds yet another costly burden on producers already fighting to stay in business, with no way to recover costs. USDA promised free tags through taxpayer funds, but many states have run out, leaving ranchers to pay out of pocket.

For many family ranchers, these costs could be the final straw, raising beef prices at the grocery store and weakening America's food security by increasing dependence on foreign supply chains.

In 2013, USDA pledged a flexible system allowing ranchers to choose ID systems that fit their operations. After multiple failed attempts and overwhelming producer opposition, the agency has now forced through another mandate, even overriding state laws that protected producer choice.

The Myth of Disease Traceability

USDA claims EIDs are needed for foreign disease control, but if it truly cared, it would stop importing beef from countries where foot-and-mouth disease is endemic.

Even USDA admits this rule covers only 11% of cattle, far short of the 70% they say would be required for meaningful traceability. This is just the beginning, USDA has stated its commitment to expand tracking animals with EID eartags from birth to slaughter.

This mandate isn't about food safety. It's about money and control, and ranchers are stuck with the bill.

Mandatory EID tags:

- ✓ Impose high costs on already struggling producers with no market return.
- ✓ Infringe on freedoms and liberties by robbing ranchers of choice.
- ✓ Promote consolidation by exempting corporate feedlots and packers who can use no-cost group ID rather than costly individual EID tags.
- ✓ Erode privacy and property rights, exposing ranchers' operations to misuse or abuse. (It is believed that most of the chips in the tags are manufactured in China!)
- ✓ Provide no improvement in traceability or disease protection as the rule does not require any type of electronic record-keeping or reading system
- ✓ Penalize non-compliant ranchers with fines and loss of market access to sell their cattle.
- ✓ Open the door to future mandates tied to exports and global climate agendas.



Tens of millions in new costs, with zero return for ranchers.



Packers and eartag manufacturers profit. Ranchers pay the price.



This is not about disease, it's about control.

Stop USDA's unlawful mandate and protect independent U.S. cattle producers.



CHECKOFF REFORM

About

Since 1985, America's cattle producers have been required to pay into the beef checkoff program every time they sell livestock. Intended to promote beef, this mandatory "tax" now collects tens of millions of dollars each year, with little to no accountability to the very producers who fund it.

Producers expected a referendum vote every five years, but in nearly 40 years, not a single vote has been held. In that time, imports have more than doubled their share of the U.S. beef market, and family operations continue disappearing at an alarming rate. Since the checkoff's inception, we have lost 49% of our beef cow operations, 77% of our independent feedlots, our herd numbers are the lowest since 1950, and today, the "Big Four" packers control over 80% of fed cattle slaughter.

Ranchers have been forced to fund a system that often uses their own dollars against them, supporting corporate consolidation and creating a slush fund for organizations that don't represent independent producers, but rather, they favor policies that benefit multinational corporations and oppose needed reforms like MCOOL.

What the OFF Act Does

- ✓ Prohibits lobbying groups from receiving checkoff funds.
- ✓ Requires regular, independent audits to show exactly how funds are used.
- ✓ Bans conflicts of interest between checkoff boards and trade associations.
- ✓ Ensures checkoff programs actually promote the products they were created to represent.

The OFF Act **DOES NOT** ban checkoff programs!



Accountability & Representation

Producers deserve to know how their mandatory dollars are spent. The beef checkoff is government-mandated speech, yet producers haven't had a vote in nearly 40 years. The cattle industry has changed drastically in that time, fewer producers, fewer cattle, fewer markets, more imports, but the program has not adapted.



Fairness

Checkoff funds should support family farmers and ranchers, not corporate trade groups. U.S. producers pay 93% of checkoff dollars while importers pay only 7%, yet importers reap the same benefits. The program rewards foreign beef and corporate packers at the expense of America's cattlemen.



Transparency

Every dollar must be subject to audits and oversight. A 2010 audit uncovered misuse of checkoff funds, including lobbying, vacations, and golf outings. Without transparency and votes, corruption and waste go unchecked.



Competition, Not Consolidation

Instead of supporting independent ranchers, checkoff dollars have driven corporate consolidation, vertical integration, and the loss of competitive bidding for contracts, making cattle more like poultry and hogs, controlled by the few instead of the many.

Support the Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act (S.1848/H.R.3516)



Restore COMPETITION

The cattle industry is a textbook case of monopoly power. For over a century, the Packers and Stockyards Act (PSA) has prohibited unfair, deceptive, and discriminatory conduct in livestock markets. The PSA was strong when passed in 1921, but after courts in the 2000s required proof of "harm to industry wide competition," the law alone was no longer enough — clear rules are needed to restore its original protections.

Today, the "Big 4" packers control over 80% of fed cattle slaughter, using their market power to drive consolidation, thin the cash market, and undermine competitive price discovery. The U.S. cattle industry lost over 100,000 producers in just the past five years. Without strong antitrust enforcement and market reforms, the cattle industry risks following the poultry and hog industries into full vertical integration

For independent ranchers, less competition means lost leverage, income, and ultimately their ability to stay in business. For consumers, it means higher beef prices, fewer choices, and weaker food security for every American family.

The Problem

- **Thin Cash Market:** Packers shifted cattle from the cash market into unpriced formula contracts. With too few cattle sold openly, price discovery is nonexistent, forcing ranchers to take lower prices even as consumers pay more.
- **Unfair Practices:** Thousands of dispersed producers face only a handful of dominant packers. Some evidence suggests packers reward select feedlots with bonuses, financing, and risk-sharing contracts while denying others the same opportunities. This deserves investigation.
- **Opaque Deals:** Alternative Marketing Arrangements (AMAs) often contain no firm base price, masking true cattle values and destroying price discovery. Unpriced formula contracts and AMAs tilt market power toward packers.
- **Court Barriers:** Producers must prove "harm to industry wide competition" before enforcing PSA protections, an impossible standard that shields packers from accountability.

Congress must restore competition, fairness, and opportunity to America's independent cattle producers.

The Solutions

- **50/14 Rule:** Require packers to purchase at least 50% of their weekly cattle needs in the negotiated cash market and slaughter them within 14 days.
- **Ban Unpriced Formula Contracts:** Require a firm base price in all forward procurement contracts to restore transparency and competition.
- **Strengthen PSA Enforcement:** Clarify that producers don't have to prove industry-wide harm, eliminate the "business justification" loophole, and allow restitution and recovery of legal fees.
- **Antitrust Enforcement:** DOJ and FTC must actively investigate and address anticompetitive practices in cattle and beef markets, including excessive concentration and exclusionary contracts.
- **Build Capacity:** Support more local and regional packing plants to rebalance market power and strengthen rural economies.
- **Label Our Beef:** Restore mandatory country of origin labeling for beef in the Farm Bill. Support the bipartisan American Beef Labeling Act (S.421)



Stop NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

About

The New World Screwworm is the larval stage of a fly that lays its eggs in wounds. Unlike typical maggots, these larvae eat living tissue. They can infest something as small as a fly bite, turning minor cuts into life-threatening wounds. If left untreated, infestations can kill up to 1 in 4 animals.

America eradicated NWS in 1966 through sterile fly releases and strict checkpoints. Weakened border inspections, illegal cattle trafficking, COVID-19 disruptions, and political pressure have been cited as causes for the pest's spread from Central America into Mexico. By late 2024, NWS was confirmed in Mexico, with outbreaks quickly rising and USDA reported an outbreak just 370 miles from the U.S. border.

NWS doesn't stop at livestock. It threatens wildlife, pets, and even people. Left unchecked, it could devastate ranching, rural communities, hunting, and public health all at once.

Why Consumers Should Care

- ✓ **Food Prices:** If screwworm reaches U.S. herds, ranchers will likely face quarantines and costly treatments. These actions could cause supply chain disruptions and push beef prices higher.
- ✓ **Wildlife & Hunting:** Deer, hogs, and other wildlife can spread the parasite.
- ✓ **Public Health:** Humans can be infected too, children and the elderly are especially vulnerable.
- ✓ **Economy:** USDA warns the damage to U.S. livestock could exceed \$100 billion.
- ✓ **National Security:** Weakened U.S. herds mean greater dependence on foreign beef, undermining America's food security.

Keep the Border Closed

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins has closed the southern border to livestock trade after confirmed outbreaks in Mexico. While appreciated, the control measures taken by the Trump Administration take time to implement. The border must remain closed until Mexico eradicates the pest from within its borders.

There will likely be continuing calls to resume the importation of cheaper Mexican cattle even as screwworm outbreaks persist in Mexico. These cattle comprised less than 4% of U.S. slaughter in 2024. While the parasite exists in Mexico, the importation of Mexican cattle presents an unnecessary and avoidable risk of NWS introduction into the United States. The U.S. must not compromise the health of U.S. livestock to accommodate the financial interests of a small segment of the U.S. cattle industry.

Recent reports indicate cattle are being smuggled from Central America into Mexico. The U.S. does not allow live cattle imports from Central America, which means smuggling raises genuine concerns about the introduction of other foreign diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease in addition to NWS.



Over \$100 billion in U.S. agriculture is at risk.



Prevention is cheaper and safer than eradication later.

The border must remain closed until Mexico proves screwworm is fully eradicated.



Rebalance TRADE

About

Once the world's breadbasket, the U.S. is now a net food importer. Imports supply over 22% of beef and 70% of lamb, displacing U.S. producers and hollowing out rural America. In just the past five years, we've lost more than 21,000 beef cattle operations and 2,500 sheep operations annually.

This stems from decades of globalist trade deals that eliminated tariffs and quotas, giving foreign suppliers with lower wages, weaker currencies, and weaker safety standards an artificial advantage. Multinational packers exploit these cheap imports to suppress both the demand and price of U.S. cattle while profiting from the increased margins associated with imported beef. In 2025, Brazil blew past its quota within just 17 days and shipped more than five times its allotted amount by midyear, simply by paying the 26.4% tariff and continuing to flood the market.

This matters for every American: it increases food safety risks for families, depressed prices for ranchers, and leads to higher grocery bills as U.S. producers disappear. When ranchers fail sale barns and Main Street businesses shutter, and community tax bases shrink, weakening schools, hospitals, and infrastructure.

Imports displace U.S. producers, raise grocery bills, and weaken food security. Packers and foreign suppliers profit while American ranchers and consumers lose.

The Solutions

- ✓ **Tariffs & TRQs:** Impose strong tariffs and tariff-rate quotas on beef, lamb, and live cattle imports to give U.S. producers room to rebuild.
- ✓ **Suspend Brazilian Beef Imports:** Stop imports until corruption, quota violations, and food safety failures are fully investigated.
- ✓ **Safeguard Investigations:** Launch Section 201 investigations to protect U.S. sheep producers from surging lamb and mutton imports.
- ✓ **National Security Review:** Launch Section 232 review of beef and lamb imports as threats to food security.
- ✓ **MCOOL:** Reinstate mandatory country of origin labeling so consumers can choose U.S.-born, raised, and harvested beef.
- ✓ **Build U.S. Production:** Tariffs will incentivize herd expansion, new market entrants, and investment in local and regional processors.

Suspend unsafe imports, enforce strong tariffs and TRQs, and restore MCOOL to rebuild domestic production and secure America's food supply.

