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July 6, 2026

The Honorable Chairman John Boozman
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Ranking Member Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

TRANSMITTED ELECTRONICALLY

Dear Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, and respected members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

We, the Board of Directors of R-CALF USA, respectfully urge the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry to include the [American Beef Labeling Act of 2025 \(S. 421\)](#) in the 2026 Farm Bill. This bipartisan legislation would reinstate mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL) for beef and restore transparency in the marketplace.

As the nation's largest cattle-producer-only trade association, R-CALF USA represents independent, family-scale cattle producers across the United States. These U.S. cattle producers raise the cattle that supply American beef, and they depend on a marketplace in which American consumers can accurately identify and choose beef that was born, raised, and harvested in the United States.

We recognize that reinstating MCOOL is expected to be one of the more debated issues during the Committee's consideration of the Farm Bill. We believe, however, that providing consumers with accurate country-of-origin information is a straightforward principle that promotes transparency, informed consumer choice, and fair competition.

It is important to distinguish between the interests of the U.S. cattle industry and those of the meatpacking industry. Four large meatpackers—two of them foreign-owned—control more than [81 percent](#) of U.S. beef packing capacity, while the U.S. cattle industry consists of [approximately 622,000](#) widely dispersed, predominantly family-owned operations. As the largest segment of American agriculture, cattle production remains an economic cornerstone of rural communities in every state.

The economic interests of independent cattle producers and packers are not the same. Cattle producers seek to receive fair market value for the livestock they raise, while packers seek to procure cattle at the lowest possible cost and market beef at the highest price consumers are willing to pay. Policies that reduce cattle procurement costs may increase packer profits while reducing returns to cattle producers. As a result, policies that benefit packers do not necessarily benefit cattle producers, rural communities, or consumers.

The United States [imports substantial quantities](#) of beef and live cattle each year. [Federal import requirements](#) already require imported live cattle and imported beef products to be marked with their country of origin when they enter U.S. commerce, so packers know precisely which products are imported. Yet that information is generally not passed on to consumers at the retail level. Without MCOOL, imported beef can be sold alongside domestic beef without consumers knowing the difference. Consumers who wish to purchase beef that was born, raised, and harvested in the United States cannot do so because that information is withheld at the point of sale. As a result, consumers are denied information many consider important when making purchasing decisions, and cattle producers lose the opportunity to distinguish and receive market value for their domestic product.

Experience has shown that voluntary country-of-origin labeling has not provided consumers with consistent origin information because companies that possess that information have little economic incentive to disclose it voluntarily. As a result, a mandatory national standard is necessary to ensure consumers receive reliable and uniform country-of-origin labeling.

Support for MCOOL extends beyond cattle producers. [Polling](#) has consistently shown that Americans overwhelmingly support MCOOL for beef. At a time when consumers are increasingly interested in the origin, production, and safety of their food, transparent labeling provides meaningful information that allows individuals and families to make informed purchasing decisions. Many developed countries already require country-of-origin labeling for meat products.

Consumer demand for beef [remains strong](#) despite historically high retail prices, demonstrating that consumers place significant value on beef. As consumers continue to prioritize beef in their purchasing decisions, they increasingly expect accurate information about the products they buy, including where they originate. Country-of-origin labeling provides consumers with the information they need to make informed purchasing decisions and is an essential component of an informed and transparent marketplace.

The American Beef Labeling Act provides a practical path forward. It restores MCOOL for beef while directing the U.S. Trade Representative and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop an implementation approach that complies with U.S. international trade obligations. If a compliant means is not implemented within 12 months of enactment, beef and ground beef would be restored to the existing MCOOL statute that already applies to numerous agricultural commodities, including fruits and vegetables, fish, chicken, lamb, and other covered products under 7 U.S.C. § 1638 et seq.

Reinstating MCOOL would not restrict commerce or limit consumer choice. Rather, it would ensure that both imported and domestically produced beef are accurately identified, allowing consumers to

make informed purchasing decisions and enabling U.S. cattle producers to compete based on the origin and value of the product they produce.

There are few agricultural issues that unite independent cattle producers and consumers as strongly as MCOOL for beef. By restoring transparency, promoting fair competition, and preserving consumers' right to know where their food originates, the American Beef Labeling Act advances important public and marketplace interests.

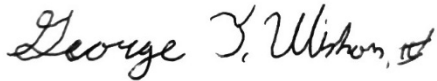
For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry to include the American Beef Labeling Act of 2025 (S. 421) in the 2026 Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

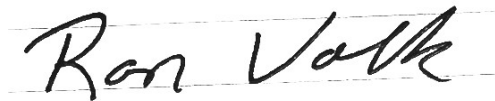
Dave Hyde, Region VIII, President, Ohio



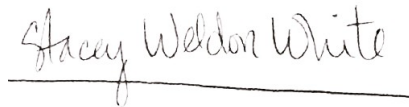
George Wishon, Region I, Washington



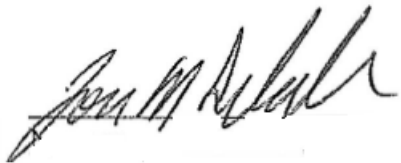
Ron Volk, Region III, North Dakota



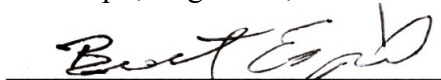
Stacey Weldon White, Region V, Texas



Jon Schaben, Region VII, Iowa



Brent Espil, Region XI, Nevada



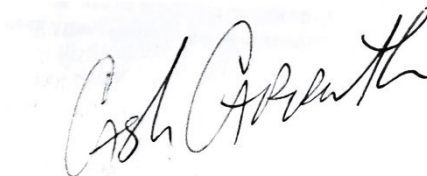
Eric Gropper, Region X, Vice President, South Dakota



Judy McCullough, Region II, Wyoming



Cash Carruth, Region IV, New Mexico



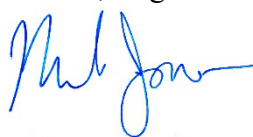
Freddie Keaton, Region VI, Missouri



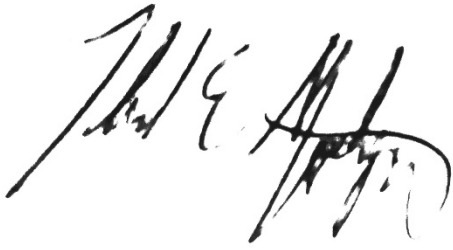
Mario Tarango, Region IX, Florida



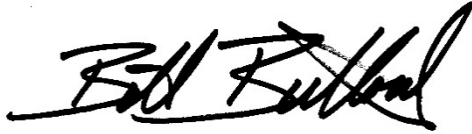
Mike Jones, Region XII, Arkansas



Thad Montgomery, Region XIII, Virginia



Justin Oberling, Region XIV, Illinois



Bill Bullard, Secretary and CEO