

October 5, 2004

Country of Origin Labeling Program
Room 2092-S
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, STOP 0249
1400 Independence Ave
SW. Washington, DC 20250-0249

Dear Country of Origin Labeling Program:

I am pleased to respond to the **Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling of Fish and Shellfish; Interim Rule** proposed October 5, 2004 that is designed to require retailers to notify their customers of the country of origin of covered commodities.

I would like to begin by saying how impressed I was with **the wording** of the legislation. Whenever I had a question about what was considered "xyz" there was a definition a bit further down, or was included in the question and answer section. The consumers of America-whom this rule effects, will be able to respond appropriately, without sitting with a dictionary to try and understand everything inside the rule.

This rule would require retailers--any person engaged in the business of selling any perishable agricultural commodity at retail--to notify their customers of the country of origin of: beef, lamb, pork, fish, **shellfish**, perishable agricultural commodities, and peanuts. This rule **enables consumers to have more choice in decision-making while at the grocery store.**

I can see how **this** labeling could get out of hand. The **fact that ingredient's on processed food items are not included** is wonderful.

I also like the **name**. A "COOL" label sounds like **something** I would want on my product. All retailers will want to **get involved** because of competition. No one wants to be "out-done" by **another retailer**. **Great idea!** I also like the idea that even groups that are not included in the bill can take part in labeling their products. This allows for others to take part in the wonderful process, without going through the legislative process.

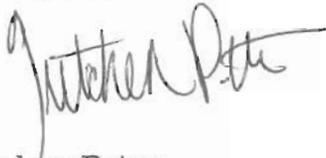
I think the American people would be in favor of this. More people will want to purchase American products than products that are from Afghanistan or some other country. This will stimulate the economy. All because **fish** need a COOL label.

I **generally** support this regulation. Although I cannot help but wonder, **is this a way** for the government to influence the people by **telling** them what

to purchase based on the food's country of origin? Why did this begin?
Does it have to do with suspicions of funding terrorist organizations?

These are just a few ideas that are bouncing around in my head. I would assume that you have already formulated answers to them, and I would like to hear them.

Thank you and great job,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gretchen Peter". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gretchen Peter
Student
Southern Methodist University