**COOL AMBASSADOR DRAFT PRESS RELEASE**

Please use this as a guiding document when submitting press releases to your local newspaper or print publication. Use the email template below to submit to your local editor, filling in the blanks with the proper term. If you haven’t heard back within a week, follow-up with a phone call.

***Email Template:***

Greetings!

As a supporter of American agriculture and our nation’s ability to produce a safe and sustainable food supply, I have recently joined a national effort led by the United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA) to reestablish a country-of-origin labeling (COOL) program on U.S. beef products.

As the law currently stands, there are no federally-regulated definitions as to what constitutes a beef product of the U.S.A. As a [CONSUMER/PRODUCER] of beef products, this lack of a standard definition concerns me. I joined USCA’s COOL Ambassador Team to lead the charge in reestablishing a country-of-origin labeling program for U.S. beef.

I do hope you’ll consider placing the below opinion piece in your publication to inform your readers of this important issue. Agriculture affects every person, every day, and I strongly believe this topic deserves attention.

Please feel free to contact me at [PHONE] if you have any additional questions.

Thank you,

[NAME]

[CITY, STATE]

***Title Suggestions (please choose ONE and fill in the name of your city or town.):***

[CITY/TOWN] local joins national effort to put American ranchers first

[CITY/TOWN] local joins the fight for Country-of-Origin Labeling on U.S. beef products

[CITY/TOWN] local stands up for America’s farmers and ranchers

***Press Release Content:***

[CITY/STATE] – In 2015, Congress repealed a law that allowed consumers to identify the origin of their beef products. Due to the repeal of the Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) law, there are currently no clear definitions for what constitutes a U.S.A beef product. This allows beef that has been mixed with both foreign and domestic product to be labeled as “Made in The U.S.A”, so long as it was packaged within U.S. borders.

[NAME] of [CITY/TOWN] recently joined the fight to reestablish a country-of-origin labeling program. The national effort, led by the United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA), seeks to build a grassroots network of supporters for the beef labeling program. The “COOL Ambassador Team” will recruit individuals from all 50 states to serve as the campaign leader for their respective region.

[NAME] added, “Each ambassador is responsible for signing onto a letter to President Donald J. Trump, reaching out to their local groceries and retail stores, and contacting their Congressional delegation in support of country-of-origin labeling on U.S. beef products. Our nation’s ability to produce a safe and sustainable food supply is a strength that we need to protect. I am proud to lend my voice in support of America’s farmers and ranchers.”

The United States Cattlemen's Association and the COOL Ambassador Team asks that only beef that has been born, raised and harvested in the United States be labeled as U.S.A. Beef. For example, cattle or beef that is imported into our borders and then undergoes further processing or handling at a USDA-inspected facility can be labeled as a "Product of the United States”, even if the handling of the product was minimal. This lack of a clearly defined label is highly misleading to the consumer. Consumers are only able to make wise choices if provided the information they need to make those choices.

Clear, transparent, defined labeling fulfills:

**1. Consumers’ desire for transparency and freedom of choice in the foods they purchase.**

Consumers are aware that there may be different feed, veterinary practices or husbandry practices that are used in raising beef or cattle in other countries. For example, some countries utilize forced or slave labor in the raising of cattle and production of beef. Other countries cause irreparable environmental damage, either through rainforest deforestation or harmful production practices. Consumers have the right to make decisions that align with their personal values and beliefs.

**2. The ability of consumers and retailers to recognize products that have been recalled, thereby increasing food safety at home and in the grocery store.**

When a recall is imposed on certain beef products, it is critical that retail stores are able to effectively trace that product. Additionally, Consumers and retailers need to have the capacity to trace product and make smart decisions in the case of bio-security issues involving herd health or when emerging zoonotic diseases come to light. Recently, Brazilian police accused more than 100 inspectors of taking bribes in exchange for allowing the sale of rotten products, cheating on export documents or failing to inspect packing plants. In these cases, it becomes even more critical to be able to distinguish domestic beef from foreign beef at the retail counter.

**3. The prevention of U.S. economic loss by ensuring our ranchers, feedlot owners, and backgrounders are all allowed the opportunity to succeed in a global marketplace.**

U.S. cattle producers need to have the ability to differentiate their domestic product from imported product in the marketplace. Country-of-origin labeling prevents U.S. agriculture jobs from being outsourced to other countries who can produce beef at a lower cost due to less stringent environmental and workplace regulations. Just as Americans don't want U.S. factories moved overseas, why would we send agriculture jobs out of our country? Once those agriculture jobs are lost, we will then have to rely on imported foods to sustain our nation’s growing population. This undermines our ability to ensure a safe and affordable food supply, putting national security at risk.

Please support the clear and transparent labeling of USA born, raised and slaughtered beef. For more information, www.americanswantlabeledbeef.weebly.com. Would you like to join the COOL Ambassador Team? Producers and consumers are both welcome! Contact USCA Policy & Outreach Coordinator Lia Biondo at lia@wssdc.com or (202) 870-1552.

SIGN THE PETITION: bit.ly/COOLforBeef (link is case sensitive)