

September 4, 2008

To Livestock Industry Stakeholders:

In an unprecedented meeting on August 26, 2008, 70 representatives of over 30 livestock industry sector, species and food retail organizations and companies came together in Kansas City, Missouri to develop universal procedures for implementing requirements of the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) law which take affect Sept. 30, 2008. Our principal goal was to agree on universal procedures and language for using the necessary affidavits and/or declarations of Country of Origin (CoO) to move origin claims along the livestock's chain of custody/ownership to slaughter facilities to assure that meat covered commodities will be accurately labeled at retail.

The undersigned are pleased to report that we accomplished our objective and the attached universal "Country of Origin Affidavit/Declaration" statements\* are recommended to the livestock industry at-large in establishing and forwarding country of origin claims on livestock covered by the COOL law (cattle (including veal), swine, sheep and goats). In our endeavors, we sought the simplest, most effective, least burdensome approach for producers, marketing businesses, feeders and packers to use in implementing and complying with COOL. We hope you will agree and will join us in adopting the attached "Affidavit/Declaration of Origin" statements in your operation to eliminate duplicative onerous CoO procedures.

In addition to using an affidavit/declaration of origin, the U. S. Department of Agriculture permits packers to rely on the presence of an official ear tag and/or marking on animals that are part of a National Animal Identification System (NAIS) compliant system or other official identification system, such as the Canadian or Mexico official systems. For information on the use of COOL compliant identification systems, we strongly suggest you contact a USDA representative.

For questions or further information respective to the attached documents, please feel free to contact any of the assigned organizations and or companies in implementing CoO procedures in your operation.

Sincerely,

**Agri Beef Co.**  
**American Farm Bureau Federation**  
**American Foods Group**  
**American Hereford Assn.**  
**American Meat Institute**  
**American Sheep Industry Assn.**  
**Cargill Meat Solutions**  
**Dairy Farmers of America**  
**Farmland Foods**  
**FPL Food**  
**Greater Omaha Packing Co.**  
**Harris Ranch Beef Co.**  
**JBS Swift & Co.**  
**John Morrell Co.**  
**Kansas Cattlemen's Assn.**

**Kansas Livestock Assn.**  
**Livestock Marketing Assn.**  
**National Cattlemen's Beef Assn.**  
**National Farmers Organization**  
**National Farmers Union**  
**National Livestock Producers Assn.**  
**National Meat Assn.**  
**National Milk Producers Federation**  
**National Pork Producers Council**  
**National Pork Board**  
**R-CALF USA**  
**Smithfield Beef Group**  
**Texas Cattle Feeders Assn.**  
**Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Assn.**  
**U. S. Cattlemen's Assn.**

## Recommended Country of Origin Affidavit/Declaration Statements

**Continuous Country of Origin Affidavit/Declaration:** *(The following affidavit statement could be used by any operation in the livestock chain attesting to the Country of Origin of livestock but particularly for first-level producers.)*

As an affidavit is deemed by USDA as an official record of Country of Origin, I attest through first-hand knowledge, normal business records, or producer affidavit(s) that all livestock referenced by this document or other communications specific to the transaction and transferred are of \_\_\_\_\_ origin. Should the origin of my livestock become other than that described above, I agree to notify the buyer/agent when this occurs.

This affidavit/declaration shall remain in effect until revoked in writing by the undersigned and is delivered to \_\_\_\_\_ (agent/buyer).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Business/Farm/Ranch Names/Location

**Country of Origin Declaration Language for Seller/Buyer Invoices and Other Sales Documents with a Continuous Declaration on Record or as a Stand-Alone Declaration of Origin:** *(The following declaration of Country of Origin statement would be used as a supporting declaration of origin specific to transactions involving livestock from persons with a continuous affidavit on file, or as a stand alone affidavit/declaration on specific transaction(s) on invoices, check-in sheets and other sales documents.)*

I attest that all livestock referenced by this document and transferred are of \_\_\_\_\_ origin.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appended Declaration Statement for Immediate/Direct Supplier Transactions to Packers:** *(Some packers may request that their immediate/direct suppliers add the following language to the continuous or sales record affidavit/declaration statements to affirm the period of time in which Country of Origin records would be maintained by their immediate suppliers. This may be necessary as packers are required by law to maintain Country of Origin records for one-year and they must be able to obtain records from their immediate suppliers within that one-year period to substantiate country of origin claims)*

I attest that \_\_\_\_\_ (Insert business name) has, and will maintain records of livestock origin for one year from the date of delivery of the livestock to the packer/buyer.

I attest that these records reflecting specific transactions are available for inspection for the sole purpose of compliance with an audit as described by the country-of-origin labeling provisions contained in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 as amended. (P.L. 108-767, USCA section 1638a, 2003).