November 23, 2026

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Glenn "G.T." Thompson
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Angie Craig
Ranking Member, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Boozman and Thompson and Ranking Members Klobuchar and Craig:

The undersigned organizations are American-owned, independent, mid-sized beef processors that provide competition, processing capacity, and market access throughout rural America. We thank you for your leadership on food and agricultural issues and for your commitment to American farmers, ranchers, and consumers in completing work on the Farm Bill under difficult circumstances in the few remaining days of the 119th Congress.

We support the U.S. Department of Agriculture's voluntary "Product of USA" label for beef. Under USDA's requirements, single-ingredient beef products bearing the claim must come from cattle born, raised, harvested, and processed entirely within the United States. More than 30 companies currently use the voluntary label, providing a market-based way to differentiate U.S. beef, potentially add value for producers, and give consumers greater choice.

During the Senate Agriculture Committee's markup of the Farm Bill, the Committee adopted an amendment to implement mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL) for beef. While we strongly support USDA's voluntary Product of USA label, we oppose reinstating MCOOL for beef. A government labeling requirement would add costs and complexity throughout the beef supply chain while undermining the market-based value the voluntary program is already creating.

The costs associated with MCOOL compliance would be significant throughout the entire supply chain and, ultimately, would be passed on to the consumers. A recent study sponsored by the Meat Institute estimated first-year implementation costs for MCOOL for beef at $721 million. Labeling for ground beef alone would add between $202 million and $688 million annually, depending on implementing regulations. We provide consumers with the nutrient-dense beef they demand; now is not the time to add costs to those products.

At a time when consumers are already facing significant food-cost pressures, we should be working to lower costs, not adding new ones. Consumers who value U.S.-origin labeling and are willing to pay for it already have that choice through the voluntary

Product of USA program. A mandatory system, however, would impose additional costs across the supply chain and ultimately on all consumers, including those who can least afford another increase in the price of beef. If beef becomes less affordable, consumers may shift their purchases to lower-cost proteins, putting strong beef demand at risk. The voluntary Product of USA program provides meaningful origin information while preserving efficiency, consumer choice, and affordability.

We urge you to allow the voluntary Product of USA labeling program to succeed. Please do not include MCOOL for beef in the Farm Bill.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

David Jagodzinske
American Foods Group (WI, MN, NE, MO)

Trevor Caviness
Caviness Beef Packers (TX)
CS Beef Packers (ID)

Brian Coelho
Harris Ranch Beef Company (CA)

Francois Leger
FPL Food LLC (GA)

Robert Rebholtz, Jr.
Washington Beef (WA)

Nik Harkias
True West Beef (ID)