

## ***CCA Reacts to Voluntary Product of USA Labelling Ruling***

*March 11, 2024*

Calgary - The Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) is disappointed that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published a final Product of USA labeling rule that adopts the most onerous standard in the world - namely that to qualify for the label meat must be derived from animals born, raised, slaughtered, and processed in the US - while failing to give meaningful consideration to other options that would have respected the high level of integration in our North American supply chains and food systems.

The integration of the North American live cattle and beef supply chain is unlike anywhere else in the world, contributing to both food security and local and regional food systems. The U.S. and Canada have the largest two-way trade in live cattle and beef in the world. U.S. small and medium sized processors and local and regional food systems rely on Canadian cattle to thrive and stay in business.

“It is crucial to address any issues that threaten or diminish cattle and beef trade between Canada and the U.S.,” said Nathan Phinney, President of CCA. “We are very concerned that the rule will lead to discrimination against live cattle imports and undermine the beneficial integration of the North American supply chain.”

CCA submitted extensive comments to USDA and expressed our concerns when the rule was proposed, suggesting an alternative that would be consistent with international practice, which USDA’s rule clearly is not.

The rule is set to come into effect January, 2026 and we will be monitoring closely for any segregation of cattle, which would impact beef producers on both sides of the border. CCA will be working with stakeholders on potential impacts; the voluntary measure could be determined by Canada and/or Mexico to contravene the WTO’s finding in the mandatory Country of Origin Labelling (mCOOL) case.

Canada and Mexico have retained the WTO’s 2015 authorization to retaliate against an origin labelling measure that would unfairly discriminate against imports of live cattle and pigs.

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