



Dear LMA Member & Livestock Marketing Business Owner,

As a follow-up to our September 6 communication to our membership on the implementation of Country of Origin Labeling, we are providing you additional information to clarify certain issues that have recently come to our attention. Included in this mailing is: (1) the various affidavit/declaration of origin statements, with an explanation of how to use them, separated out by their specific uses; (2) additional questions and answers that have come to us since our first mailing; and (3) examples of how affidavits work under different scenarios.

As we previously indicated, the federal country-of-origin labeling (COOL) law will take effect September 30, 2008. Under this law, packers and retailers are required to label certain meat products with their country(s) of origin. To accomplish this task, producers and marketing businesses must declare the origin of cattle, sheep, goats, and swine as they are sold or change possession.

In a recent meeting, co-hosted by LMA, more than 30 livestock industry organizations and companies as well as USDA officials came together and developed universal affidavits and declarations of origin and procedures for moving origin information along the livestock chain of custody. These origin declaration statements and procedures are now being widely adopted within the industry as the simplest and least burdensome process for implementing COOL throughout the industry.

You may have been contacted by some data management company representatives making wild claims that you must have extensive data management and electronic identification programs in place to meet the COOL requirements. This is NOT TRUE. While you may choose to use an outside data management provider to help you manage your COOL affidavit recordkeeping, it is not required that you do so in order to comply with COOL.

As the entire livestock industry begins to put in place the origin affidavit/declaration process you are certain to hear from confused and concerned sellers and buyers. At LMA, we want to help you as much as possible in responding to any questions you may get from customers on COOL. On the accompanying pages, you will find LMA's recommended steps for managing COOL at your marketing business. If you have additional questions about this process or information you are receiving from your sellers and buyers, USDA, etc. please contact us at 800-821-2048.

Sincerely,

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