



## **Policy 2009**

Board approved  
January 14, 2009

### **Common Sense Approach to Food Safety**

Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) legislation, as adopted by the USA, is market protectionist in nature, potentially a technical barrier to trade, and is deemed inconsistent with international trade rules, including NAFTA and the WTO. COOL legislation will add huge implementation and enforcement costs throughout the supply chain. This proposed US legislation fails to adequately address food safety issues, and is not uniformly applied to trade in all perishable foods and food products, and to all retailers.

The USA acknowledges that the instituted COOL legislation was never intended to address food safety; rather this legislation governs “marketing issues”, and was only developed to give consumers the right to make informed purchasing decisions based upon the “country of origin”. Canadians are concerned about food safety as a priority to be held above the origin of the food, and as such, “*Food Safety Policy*” and “*Country of Origin Labeling - Marketing Policy*” should be treated as two separate issues, each with distinct rules to better protect and inform the consumer.

Canada has some of the most stringent food production standards in the world, and as a result, Canadian consumers benefit from some of the safest food in the world. Furthermore, Canadians are demanding that labeling not lead to a discounting of Canadian products, which is a distinct possibility under COOL legislation.

### **Consequently, the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce recommends that the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada:**

1. Take a leadership role in establishing and promoting the highest level of International Food Safety Standards & Practices applicable to international trade involving all perishable foods and food products, with due recognition and consideration for the following:
  - a. That Food Safety Standards Policy is to protect the health and well being of the consumer, and
  - b. That said policy must be consistent with international trade rules, including WTO and NAFTA.
  - c. That said policy must be applied uniformly throughout the food supply chain, must be economically feasible to implement and to enforce, both domestically and internationally, and must include labeling requirements referenced in said policy that:
    - i. better inform the consumer about the quality of the product, and
    - ii. promote Canadian food traceability and production systems throughout the supply chain to enhance food safety standards and practices.
2. Support trade action by Canada's beef/pork production and processing sectors, in conjunction with the government of Canada, to combat the market protectionist aspects of COOL legislation.