

## **FEDERAL LAW**

### ***Letters for Customer of marketing businesses regarding Continuous Origin Affidavits***

On September 30, 2008, Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) goes into effect as FEDERAL LAW. Under COOL, all Livestock must have their origin (USA, USA and/or Canadian, USA and/or Mexican, etc.) declared before the animals are sold. As a livestock producer this will mean that you will need to sign an affidavit or origin declaration when you market your animals.

To simplify this process, we are asking that you sign and return the accompanying Continuous Origin Affidavit. This affidavit allows you to declare the origin of all livestock that you sell and is valid until you revoke or change the affidavit in writing. In other words, if all the livestock that you sell are of USA origin you will only need to sign this Continuous Origin affidavit once, we will keep the record on file and it will automatically declare the origin of all livestock that you sell until you have revoked the affidavit or changed it.

If you do not already have a Continuous Origin Affidavit on file with us when you wish to market your livestock you will be asked at that time to either sign a Continuous Origin Affidavit or a one-time declaration of origin for the livestock selling that day. It will be important that you, the owner or person with first hand knowledge about the livestock being marketed, sign the affidavit. WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT AN AFFIDAVIT SIGNED BY A TRUCKER OR TRANSPORTER.

For these purchasing livestock, we will provide an origin declaration on your buyer invoice or other purchase documents declaring the origin of the livestock listed in that transaction. It is very important that you collect a similar declaration from whom ever you purchase livestock and you should keep these documents on file for one year from the purchase date.

In addition to using an affidavit/declaration of origin, the U.S. Department of Agriculture permits the use 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 systems, such as the Canadian or Mexican official systems. For information on the use of COOL compliant identification systems, we strongly suggest you contact your local USDA Farm Services office.

Please let us know if you have any questions about the implementation of COOL, as we wish to work with you to make this process as workable as possible for all concerned.

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