

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Country of Origin Labeling

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Overview

The federal farm bill of 2002 [Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, Public Law 107-171], signed into law on May 13, 2002, includes provisions for the labeling of "country of origin" on certain foods including beef, lamb, pork, ground meats, certain fish, perishable commodities, and peanuts. USDA guidelines for the labeling process were to become effective 180 days after publication in the federal register. The **federal** country of origin labeling program is voluntary for retailers until USDA regulations go into effect on September 30, 2004. House File 978 makes the federally-developed guidelines effective for Minnesota retailers on October 1, 2003. This is one year earlier than the regulations will be effective U.S.-wide.

Section

- 1 Foods; country or origin labeling.** Provides that on October 1, 2003, "country of origin labeling" requirements go into effect for Minnesota retailers. The labeling requirements will be based on USDA labeling guidelines.
- 2 Effective date.** Section 1 is effective October 1, 2003.