



UNITED TO GROW FAMILY AGRICULTURE

April 9, 2018

FSIS Docket Clerk

United States Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
Room 2534 South Building
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

Attention: Ms. Mary Porretta, Petitions Manager; Mr. Matthew Michael, Director, Issuances Staff, Office of Policy and Program Development;

Emails: Mary.Porretta@fsis.usda.gov; Matthew.Michael@fsis.usda.gov

Re: Letter in Support of the February 9, 2018 Petition to Establish Beef and Meat labeling Requirements: To Exclude Product Not Derived Directly from animals Raised and Slaughtered from the Definition of “Beef” and “Meat” filed by the United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA); Petition 18-01

Dear Ms. Porretta & Mr. Michael:

On behalf of the nearly 200,000 family farmer, rancher, fisher and rural members of National Farmers Union (NFU) I am pleased to submit this letter in support of Petition 18-01. NFU supports the U.S. Cattlemen’s Association’s request of the Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to establish certain meat and beef labeling requirements.

NFU’s member-driven policy states “We oppose...labeling alternative protein sources as meat.” We are concerned with the recent introduction of foods composed of alternative protein sources that are being labeled and marketed as “meat.” NFU embraces new opportunities for family farmers and ranchers, including further development of markets for plant-based and insect-based proteins. However, we believe all food products should be clearly labeled in a manner that helps consumers make informed decisions and allows producers to differentiate their products.

NFU is also concerned by new research toward developing alternative meat products grown in laboratories using animal cells. These products are not derived from animals born, raised, and harvested in a traditional manner, and should not be permitted to be marketed as “meat.”

We support the petition’s request to restrict the broader definition of “meat” to the tissue or flesh of animals that have been harvested in the traditional manner. Furthermore, we support the petition’s request to define “beef” as products deriving from cattle that have been born, raised, and harvested in the traditional manner. We also urge consistent application of the requested definition standards across meat products, including poultry, pork, and lamb.

After careful review and consideration, NFU fully supports Petition 18-01. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss NFU's support, please contact Matt Perdue, NFU's Government Relations Representative, via e-mail at mperdue@nfudc.org or by phone at 202-554-1600. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roger" and the last name "Johnson" clearly distinguishable.

Roger Johnson
President