

News release

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All meat to be labelled with country of origin

But new labelling won't help identify animal welfare issues of meat on shelves

Compassion in World Farming, the leading international farm animal welfare charity, welcomes a new piece of legislation that will make it compulsory to label the country of origin for all fresh pork, lamb and poultry meat. (A separate piece of legislation for labelling beef was already introduced during the BSE crisis in the 1990s.) The campaigning charity is hoping the labelling will be more in-depth in the future, to help consumers identify welfare issues for the animals reared for their meat. For example, shoppers are unwittingly buying chickens that have been intensively reared – clear labelling can prevent this.

Compassion in World Farming and its supporters have been lobbying the Government for some years for this regulation to be introduced. However this new legislation will only make it compulsory for the *origin* of the meat to be labelled. Compassion is pushing for labelling that will identify not only the animal's place of birth but also where it was reared and slaughtered.

Detailed labelling would enable consumers to identify if the animals have been transported live from one country to another, or if the animal was slaughtered without first being stunned.

Consumers increasingly wish to know the provenance of food and this would give them enough information to make informed choices about the food they purchase.

The European Commission says: "The Commission must examine within two years after the entry into force of the new regulation the possible extension of the compulsory labelling of the country of origin to meat used as an ingredient. One year later, the Commission must examine the same question with regard to other types of meat (than beef, pork, lamb and poultry), milk, milk used as an ingredient, unprocessed foods, single-ingredient products and ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food."

The new Regulation is yet to be finalised - the next stage is the vote of the full European Parliament in July this year, and then the EU Council of Agriculture ministers.

These principles already apply to beef and veal, so to enforce it on all meat and poultry products would be an extension of a law already in place. When buying beef or veal, Compassion

recommends consumers buy British and especially British organic and to look out for “grass fed” on the label to ensure the cows have experienced a higher welfare.

For more information, please visit www.ciwf.org

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Notes to Editors:

For further information, images or to arrange interviews contact Julie Jenner or Lara Richardson on T:01483 521952 or 07771 926005 (out of office hours) or email julie.jenner@ciwf.org

- 1 Compassion in World Farming was founded over 40 years ago in 1967 by a British farmer who became horrified by the development of modern, intensive factory farming. Today we campaign peacefully to end all cruel factory farming practices. We believe that the biggest cause of cruelty on the planet deserves a focused, specialised approach – so we only work on farm animal welfare.

- 2 In April this year The European Parliament’s Environment Committee voted that the following must be adhered to:
 - The country or place of provenance must be given for all meat and poultry and that the country or place of provenance may be given as a single place for animals only where the animals have been born, reared and slaughtered in the same country or place. In other cases information on each of the different places of birth, rearing and slaughter shall be given. This is already the case for beef and veal. This could help us enormously in our work against long distance transport
 - Meat derived from animals slaughtered without stunning must be labelled ‘meat from slaughter without stunning’.

Now that the Environment Committee has passed these amendments, the next stage is the vote of the full European Parliament in July this year, and then the EU Council of Agriculture ministers.