

Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council Policy Guidelines Country of Origin Labelling of Food

SCOPE/ AIM

To develop regulatory principles for country of origin labelling to ensure that Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) meets its statutory obligations under Section 10 of the *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991*. In meeting its statutory obligations, it is recognised that country of origin labelling is not a public health and safety issue.

HIGH ORDER PRINCIPLES

- Ensure that consumers have access to accurate information regarding the contents and production of food products.
- Ensure that consumers are not misled or deceived regarding food products.
- Be consistent with, and complement, Australia and New Zealand national policies and legislation including those relating to fair-trading and industry competitiveness.
- Be cost effective overall, and comply with Australia and New Zealand obligations under international agreements while not being more trade restrictive than necessary.

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

- Balance the benefit to consumers of country of origin labelling with the cost to industry and consumers of providing it.
- Ensure consistent treatment of domestic and imported food products with regard to country of origin requirements.

POLICY GUIDANCE

In developing a new standard for country of origin labelling in the *Food Standards Code*, FSANZ should ensure that:

- the standard is consistent with the High Order and Specific Principles;
- country of origin labelling of food is mandatory for the purpose of enabling consumers to make informed choices;
- country of origin labelling applies to the whole food, not individual ingredients; and
- consideration is given to the existing temporary Australian standard (Standard 1.1A.3).