

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING

The Issue

- NZ Law does not require the identity of the country of origin for fresh fruit and vegetables to be disclosed to consumers at the point of purchase.
- NZ consumers therefore do not know where their fresh fruit and vegetables comes from.

HortNZ's Position

Fresh Fruit and Vegetables country of origin by law be disclosed to consumers at point of purchase by fruit label, packaging or bin label.

As international trade in food products increases the origin of food has become a critical consumer choice issue. This demand for identification has led to the introduction of mandatory country of origin labelling by most countries around the world.

New Zealand's current voluntary country of origin labelling system for food:

- Places the decisions on whether to provide country of origin information with the suppliers.
- Deprives consumers of information they want.
- Is not equivalent with NZ's existing regulations that require mandatory country of origin labelling for footwear, whiteware, wine and clothing.
- Disadvantages fruit and vegetable growers as their products are identified as NZ grown.
- Means that our food regulations are out of step with Australia and over 90% of our trading partners.
- Is inconsistent, is not reliable, has no rigour, no audit and no consumer assurance.
- Allows many small retailers, hawkers and weekend market sellers to sell unlabelled product.

Is this a trade barrier? No. Most countries around the world have some form of mandatory country of origin labelling. It is New Zealand that is out of step with the rest of the world.

Will we face retaliatory action? No. Most countries that have mandatory country of origin rules already. Australia has a significant mandatory country of origin labelling regime.

How can this be done?

New Zealand could adopt the FSANZ Food Standards Code country of origin requirements for fresh fruit and vegetables.

Compliance Costs

- HortNZ does not believe that compliance costs will be significant.
- New Zealand's two major retailers selling approximately 65% of all fresh produce are already committed to displaying country of origin either on all produce or for all imported produce.
- HortNZ does not believe that the adoption of the FSANZ Food Standards Code country of origin requirements will add costs to New Zealand consumers.
- Most food processors are already manufacturing to the FSANZ standard, regardless of which country they sell in.
- A small number of manufacturers (usually based offshore with a NZ distributor listed on the packaging and no information on the origin of the food) take advantage of New Zealand's lack of regulation in this area.

CoOL Countries vs. Not CoOL Countries

CoOL Countries	Not CoOL
Argentina	Colombia
Australia	Guatemala
Austria	Honduras
Belgium	Hong Kong
Brazil	Malaysia
Canada	New Zealand
Chile	Philippines
China	Vietnam
Costa Rica	
Czech Republic	
Denmark	
Dominican Republic	
Ecuador	
Egypt	
El Salvador	
Estonia	
Finland	
France	
Germany	
Greece	
Hungary	
India	
Indonesia	
Ireland	
Israel	
Italy	
Japan	
Latvia	
Luxembourg	
Mexico	
Netherlands	
Norway	
Panama	
Peru	
Portugal	
Republic of South Korea	
Russia	
Saudi Arabia	
Singapore	
South Africa	
Spain	
Sweden	
Switzerland	
Taiwan	
Thailand	
Turkey	
United Arab Emirates	
United Kingdom	
United States of America	
Venezuela	