

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

**CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING
TWENTY-NINTH SESSION
OTTAWA, CANADA, 1 - 4 MAY 2001**

DISCUSSION PAPER ON COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING

COMMENTS FROM:

**CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL (CI)
49TH PARALLEL BIOTECHNOLOGY CONSORTIUM**

DISCUSSION PAPER ON COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING

CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL (CI):

Consumers International welcomes this discussion paper and support the points it makes regarding consumers concerns to know the origin of their foods and precisely where they were produced.

There is concern and evidence that currently consumers are misled about the country of origin of their foods. Codex should address this matter and ensure that the origin of foods is not obscured or misrepresented to consumers.

CI supports this discussion paper and the proposals that it makes for amendments to the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged foods.

49TH PARALLEL BIOTECHNOLOGY CONSORTIUM:

The 49th Parallel Biotechnology Consortium (49P) would like to express its support for the revisions to the current standard of Codex Alimentarius on Country of Origin Labelling being suggested by the UK, Switzerland, Malaysia and Consumers International.

We agree that current labelling practices, including those of Canada, do not provide consumers with adequate information regarding the origin(s) of prepackaged foods. In fact, grade/quality and origin information that is provided can often be overtly misleading. ("Canada Grade xxx " on a can of pineapple, for example. The pineapple is neither grown nor processed in Canada and the grade is virtually meaningless.)

We fully support the suggested revisions concerning the labelling of country of origin for both products and ingredients.

We would add that at this time, with the experience of TSE, Foot and Mouth Disease, antibiotic resistance, etc., it would seem obvious that country and even region of origin is becoming increasingly important, if not crucial, to public confidence in the global food system. Otherwise, consumers will rightly choose to purchase what they can trust because they know exactly where it is grown and produced and processed and by whom.