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NFU Will Not Support Legislative Changes to COOL

WASHINGTON (Jan. 27, 2012) – [National Farmers Union](#) (NFU) President Roger Johnson issued the following statement today to urging U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk to pursue a robust appeals process on the recent decision of the World Trade Organization (WTO) that ruled against the United States’ implementation of the country-of-origin-labeling (COOL) law:

“NFU has a proud record of supporting COOL. We were instrumental in getting the COOL laws passed in 2002 and again in 2008.

“We will oppose any attempt to change that law. Fortunately, the WTO decision against U.S. country-of-origin-labeling did not find fault with our law. It simply found fault with the rules and regulations which were used to implement the law.

“As the office of the USTR contemplates its approach to the WTO decision, we urge them to mount a robust and vigorous defense of COOL.

“We are aware that behind the scenes attempts at negotiating a settlement to the WTO decision have some stakeholders arguing that we must weaken our law. We strongly disagree and urge a fervent defense.

“Consumers have a right to know where their meat comes from – and they overwhelmingly want to know just that.”

The labeling law was passed as a part of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 and amended in 2008. COOL requires retailers to notify their customers of the source of certain foods. Canada and Mexico filed a complaint against the United States’ law, which led to the recent ruling. The deadline for filing an appeal to the WTO decision is March 23, 2012.

National Farmers Union has been working since 1902 to protect and enhance the economic well-being and quality of life for family farmers, ranchers and rural communities through advocating grassroots-driven policy positions adopted by its membership.