



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
COMMISSIONER ADAM H. PUTNAM
THE CAPITOL

May 19, 2015

The Honorable Vern Buchanan
Co-Chairman, Florida Congressional
Delegation
2104 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Alcee Hastings
Co-Chairman, Florida Congressional
Delegation
2353 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen:

I write today to request your support for HR 2393. This important piece of legislation will repeal country of origin labeling requirements with respect to beef, pork, and chicken forestalling potential retaliatory measures by Mexico and Canada as a result of the final determination of noncompliance by the World Trade Organization (WTO) appellate body issued May 18, 2015.

As I am sure you are aware, the country of origin labeling requirements for meat as contained in the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills and implemented through USDA rulemaking in 2009 have been found by the WTO to be out of compliance with the United States' international trade obligations by discriminating against imported livestock. As a result of these findings, Mexico and Canada will be permitted to take retaliatory measures against the United States in order to be made whole.

Potential retaliation by Mexico and Canada would be detrimental to U.S. exporters of commodities to these two countries and could have a significant impact on the state of Florida given the volume of trade with Canada in particular. Canada is the recipient of more than \$900 million worth of Florida agricultural commodities every year, making Canada the industry's largest trading partner. Of particular concern are potential retaliatory measures aimed at frozen orange juice, which accounts for a significant share of all agricultural trade between Florida and Canada. At a time when our state's signature crop continues to be under tremendous pressure from the effects of citrus greening, the impact of economically devastating tariffs would be catastrophic.

Again, I urge Congress to act swiftly to bring the U.S. into compliance with its international trade obligations to prevent the imposition of economically harmful retaliatory measures on our state and the nation.

Sincerely,

Adam H. Putnam
Commissioner of Agriculture

