

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

H.P. 523 - L.D. 834

An Act to Ensure Transparency in the Labeling of Meat as Grass-fed

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §2157, sub-§15, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 528, §10 and corrected by RR 2019, c. 1, Pt. A, §23, is amended by amending the first blocked paragraph to read:

For the purposes of this subsection, "hemp" has the same meaning as in Title 7, section 2231, subsection 1-A, paragraph D; or

Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §2157, sub-§16, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 455, §1 and reallocated by RR 2019, c. 1, Pt. A, §22, is amended by amending the first blocked paragraph to read:

As used in this subsection, "poultry," "poultry product," "meat" and "meat product" have the same meanings as in section 2511; or

Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §2157, sub-§17 is enacted to read:

17. Grass-fed claims. If a person sells, offers for sale or distributes within the State or sells, offers for sale or serves in any retail food establishment or eating establishment as defined in section 2491, subsection 7 any meat or meat product as defined in section 2511 labeled or advertised as "grass-fed" or by similar designation unless the ruminant animal was grass-fed.

For purposes of this subsection, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Acceptable additional feed" means hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue without grain and other sources of roughage as well as routine mineral and vitamin supplementation.

B. "Forage" means annual or perennial grasses, forbs and other browse. "Forage" also includes cereal grain crops in the vegetative stage of growth.

C. "Grass-fed" means, with respect to meat or a meat product, that the ruminant animal from which the meat was derived:

(1) Consumed only forage and acceptable additional feed during its lifetime with the exception of milk consumed prior to its weaning; and

(2) Had continuous access to pasture during each growing season until slaughter.

A determination that meat or a meat product is misbranded may be waived by the commissioner upon application if the commissioner finds a waiver warranted due to inadvertent exposure of the animal to nonforage feedstuffs or because incidental supplementation with nonforage feedstuffs was necessary to ensure the well-being of the animal during adverse environmental or physical conditions.