CELL-CULTURED PROTEIN

Not yet commercially available, cell-cultured protein is the product of animal muscle cells being raised and harvested in a petri-dish.

PROTEIN ALTERNATIVES

Pea protein and vegetable alternatives are being placed in the same meat case as U.S. born and raised beef.

TRUTH IN LABELING

In February 2018, USCA submitted a petition for rulemaking to the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, asking the agency to define the terms ‘beef’ and ‘meat’ as products derived from the flesh of a [bovine] animal harvested in the traditional manner.

The Food and Drug Administration has made it a priority this year to tackle the issue of standards of identity for certain food products, most notably the issue of nut juices being labeled as ‘milk’. USCA has weighed in with the agency several times asking that this same priority be placed on vegetarian- or insect-based products that attempt to imitate meat.

Our members testified on the issue of foods produced using cellular technology multiple times this year and we are pleased to see the USDA and FDA recently commit to working together on labeling and oversight of cell-cultured protein as this moves forward.

Allowing these products to call themselves ‘beef’ would hijack the many years and millions of dollars of branding that producers have invested into the Beef Checkoff Program. Since 1986, nearly $1.1 billion has been raised through the contributions producers make each time a beef animal changes ownership. The alternative proteins industry is attempting to hijack our trademark branding to capitalize on consumer confusion.

It is imperative that misleading labels of alternative protein products be remedied in a timely fashion.

For more information, please contact Lia Biondo at (202) 870-1552 or lia@wssdc.com.