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## 92 percent of Americans support country-of-origin labeling requirements for food

by David Gutierrez

(NewsTarget) A new survey by *Consumer Reports* magazine has revealed that the vast majority of U.S. consumers want to know where their food comes from and how it is produced. Ninety-two percent of respondents said that an imported food's country of origin should be included on the label.

"I was definitely shocked at how high these numbers were," said co-author Dr. Urvashi Rangan.

In 2002, Congress passed a law requiring that meat be labeled with its country of origin, but implementation of the measure has been delayed twice -- most recently until September 30, 2008. In June, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it was re-opening public comment on the measure until August 20.

Recent food scares have convinced many consumers of the need for stricter [labeling](#). Problems have been uncovered with common foods such as peanut butter and lettuce, and the government has identified safety concerns with imports of [seafood](#), toothpaste and animal feed from China.

"It's time to stop the delays and stop giving in to big agribusiness and good importers," said Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards. Edwards has proposed a set of safety standards for imported foods, including mandatory country-of-origin labeling.

Rangan agrees that the labels should be mandatory. "It's much like a nutrition label or an ingredient label, in that it needs to be part of the general information coming in about imported foods," she said.

The nonprofit organization Consumers Union conducted a telephone survey of 1,004 respondents between June 7 and June 10. In addition to the results about country-of-origin labels, the survey found that 86 percent of respondents said foods labeled "natural" should contain no artificial ingredients, and 91 percent said that fish labeled "organic" should be low in toxins and produced without polluting the environment.

No standard currently exists for either "natural" food or organic seafood.

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