

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 834

H.P. 523

House of Representatives, February 21, 2023

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

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BOYER of Poland.
Cosponsored by Senator BRENNER of Cumberland and
Representatives: BOYLE of Gorham, CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham, DILL of Old Town,
GUERRETTE of Caribou, JAUCH of Topsham, PLUECKER of Warren, RISEMAN of
Harrison, Senator: TIPPING of Penobscot.

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

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

4 For the purposes of this subsection, "hemp" has the same meaning as in Title 7, section
5 2231, subsection 1-A, paragraph D; or

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

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

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

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

17 For purposes of this subsection, "grass-fed" means, with respect to meat or a meat product,
18 that the ruminant animal from which the meat was derived consumed only grass and forage
19 during its lifetime with the exception of milk consumed prior to its weaning. For purposes
20 of this subsection, "forage" means the edible parts of plants, other than separated grain, that
21 provide feed for grazing animals or that can be harvested for feeding.

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

27 **SUMMARY**

28 This bill prohibits a person from selling, offering for sale or distributing within the
29 State or selling, offering for sale or serving in any retail food establishment or eating
30 establishment any meat or meat product labeled or advertised as "grass-fed" or by similar
31 designation unless the ruminant animal was grass-fed. The Commissioner of Agriculture,
32 Conservation and Forestry may waive the determination that meat or a meat product is
33 misbranded if the commissioner finds a waiver is warranted due to inadvertent exposure of
34 the animal to nonforage feedstuffs or because incidental supplementation with nonforage
35 feedstuffs was necessary to ensure the well-being of the animal during adverse
36 environmental or physical conditions.