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Country of origin labelling must be compulsory

The New Zealand Manufacturers and Exporters Association (NZMEA) are backing calls for compulsory country of origin labelling. The Government has announced that it intends to introduce a voluntary labelling scheme, but a system that is not applied to all producers will offer little benefit to New Zealand consumers.

NZMEA Chief Executive John Walley says, "A consistent standard is the only way to ensure that New Zealand consumers are able to make informed decisions and help to enhance the 'Made in New Zealand' brand."

"Determining where products are grown and processed to gain their essential nature is fairly simple so there is no reason why all products could not comply. Many of our overseas competitors including the United States and the European Union already have mandatory labelling so there is no reason why it cannot be applied here."

"Under the current system consumers are left to guess where products have come from," says Mr Walley.

"New Zealand claims to lead the world in environmental and food safety standards, so why not leverage that perception and inform consumers?"