

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)



Senate
Office of the Secretary

'16 JAN 28 P3 57

SENATE
S. No. 3184

RECEIVED BY: *J*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

AN ACT
REQUIRING COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING OF PERISHABLE
AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES IMPORTED INTO THE PHILIPPINES AND
ESTABLISHING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE LABELING
REQUIREMENTS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 15, provides:

The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

Consumers have the right to know the country of origin of the purchase. However, there is no law requiring that imported agricultural commodities offered for retail sale bear a label identify of their country of origin.

The label that identifies the perishable agricultural commodity's country of origin would enable the consumers to make decisions about food safety concerns, or if they have concerns about pesticide, or environmental practices in specific countries.

This bill seeks to require country-of-origin labeling of perishable agricultural commodities imported into the Philippines and to establish penalties for violations of the labeling requirements.¹

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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¹ This bill was originally filed during the Thirteenth Congress and refiled in the Fifteenth Congress, First Regular Session.

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Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Imported Produce
2 Labeling Act.”

3 SECTION 2. *Definitions.* – For purposes of this Act, the term:

4 (1) “Perishable Agricultural Commodity” means, whether or not frozen or
5 packed in ice, fresh fruits and fresh vegetables of every kind and character.

6 (2) “Retailer” means person engaged in the business of selling consumer
7 products directly to consumers.

8 SECTION 3. *Indication of Country of Origin of Imported Perishable Agricultural*
9 *Commodities.* –

10 (1) Notice of Country of Origin Required – A retailer of a perishable
11 agricultural commodity into the Philippines shall inform consumers, at the final
12 point of sale of the perishable agricultural commodity to consumers, of the country
13 of origin of the perishable agricultural commodity.

14 (2) Method of Notification –

1 (A) In General – The information required by subsection (1) may be
2 provided to consumers by means of a label, stamp, mark, placard, or other
3 clear and visible sign on the imported perishable agricultural commodity or
4 on the package, display, holding unit, or bin containing the commodity at
5 the final point of sale to consumers.

6 (B) Labeled Commodities – If the imported perishable agricultural
7 commodity is already individually labeled regarding country of origin by
8 the packer, importer, or another person, the retailer shall not be required to
9 provide any additional information to comply with this Section.

10 (3) Application of Section – This Act shall apply with respect to a
11 perishable agricultural commodity imported into the Philippines after the end of
12 the six-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

13 SECTION 4. *Regulations.* – Not later than one year after the enactment of this
14 Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the
15 provisions on this Act.

16 SECTION 5. *Penalties.* – Any person who shall violate any provision of this Act
17 shall upon conviction, be subject to a fine of not less than One Thousand Pesos
18 (₱1,000.00) but not more than Ten Thousand Pesos (₱10,000.00) or imprisonment of not
19 less than two months but not more than one year, or both upon the discretion of the court.
20 If the offender is an alien, he shall be deported after service of sentence and payment of
21 fine without further deportation proceedings.

22 SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid
23 or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law of the provision not otherwise affected shall
24 remain valid and subsisting.

1 or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended
2 accordingly.

3 SECTION 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
4 following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general
5 circulation.

Approved,

/ctrsdec2015