

Consumers' Right to Know (Country of Origin of Food) Bill

The Green Party wants mandatory country of origin labelling of fresh and single ingredient food so people can know where their food comes from and can easily choose to buy local.

In April 2017, Parliament will have the opportunity to make this happen by supporting Green MP Steffan Browning's Bill, which will make it compulsory for producers to tell people where fresh and single ingredient foods come from, meaning you have more choice about the food you buy.

Eating locally grown and produced food has heaps of benefits: you're supporting local farmers, often your food travels less so uses fewer fossil fuels, and best of all - your food gets to you fresher and tastier. But how do you know if your food is locally grown?

That's where country of origin labelling comes in - it tells you where your food comes from. In New Zealand, clothes and shoes already have mandatory country of origin labelling - why not food?

Some supermarkets have chosen to do this under the current voluntary system, but we think there should be a level playing field. There's no legal requirement for your fruit, veggies, fish and meat to have country of origin labelling, so there isn't any monitoring or enforcement. We want to change that.

What does Steffan's Bill do?

The [Consumers' Right to Know \(Country of Origin of Food\) Bill](#) will make it compulsory for food retailers to label their fresh or single-ingredient food products, such as fruit, vegetables, meat and fish, nuts, grains, seed and oils, with the country where the food was grown or produced.

Why do we need this?

There are lots of reasons! You might want to support local growers and producers. You might wonder about the environmental impact of transporting food long distances. You might be concerned about fumigation and other treatments to imported produce. Whatever the reason, people want and deserve to make fully informed decisions about the food they buy.

A recent poll commissioned by Horticulture New Zealand and Consumer NZ showed that more than 70 percent of New Zealanders support mandatory labelling on fruit and vegetables.

New Zealanders want it, and our local food producers want it - it's cheap and it's time to make it a reality.

What happens overseas?

Most other countries have mandatory country of origin labelling of at least some foods, including most of our trading partners. Australia has had a strong mandatory labelling system for many years. New Zealand is behind the times in continuing to deny consumers this basic right.

What can you do to help?

Parliament will vote on the Bill on April 12th, 2017. It needs support from MPs to pass, so talking to your MP to get their support is helpful.

You can also help by signing our petition calling on parliament to support Country of Origin Food Labelling: action.greens.org.nz/CoOL. We are trying to get as many people to sign the petition as possible to send a strong message, so please share it on social media, to your networks and with friends and family.

For more information visit: action.greens.org.nz/CoOL

