



# News Release

2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22201  
703.243.6111 • [www.nmpf.org](http://www.nmpf.org)

*"Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, and Consumers"*

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Christopher Galen  
(703) 243-6111 ext. 356  
[CGalen@nmpf.org](mailto:CGalen@nmpf.org)

## **NMPF Supports New Senate Food Labeling Bill Approved Today by Agriculture Committee**

ARLINGTON, VA – The National Milk Producers Federation today urged the full Senate to act quickly on legislation that would establish national regulations to bring consistency and transparency to the labeling of ingredients and processes used in the food supply.

The Senate Agriculture Committee today approved, by a 14-6 vote, a bill introduced last week by its Chairman, Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS), that would create a common-sense, national food labeling standard offering consumers information about products that contain ingredients such as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). The legislation would preempt state laws that create labeling mandates for foods with ingredients that have been genetically modified.

Food labeling “is an area where we need a clear federal standard, not a piecemeal approach across the 50 states,” said Jim Mulhern, president and CEO of NMPF. **“We’ve learned from experience in the dairy sector that we need a strong federal policy governing labeling claims. Otherwise, we’ll end up with an unworkable series of competing and confusing state policies.”**

NMPF urged the Senate to expedite passage of Roberts’s measure, in order to prevent confusing marketing environment in the food industry this summer, when Vermont’s new law, requiring labeling of foods containing GMOs, goes into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The Senate’s approach “will provide information that shoppers want, without requiring that stigmatizing label claims be mandated at the state or federal level,” Mulhern said. “Any requirement, even at the state level, to use labels to call out GMO ingredients is a de facto scarlet letter being forced on many foods, without warrant. Mandatory GMO labels play into the fear-based marketing we see too frequently in the food industry.”

NMPF and its 31 cooperative members [co-signed a letter](#) last Tuesday with more than 600 other farm and food groups urging action on Sen. Roberts’ bill by the Senate. The House of Representatives already passed a version of a national food labeling bill last July.

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Multiple studies have shown that the associated costs with Vermont’s GMO-labeling law, and a subsequent patchwork of similar state laws, will cost American families hundreds of dollars more in groceries each year – with low-income Americans being hit the hardest.

The Roberts bill “will give consumers the information they want in a consistent and factual way,” said Mulhern. “It also reaffirms the authority of federal regulators over food safety and labeling, and prevents the creeping development of dozens of different state food labeling laws.”

Genetically modified food ingredients have been proven safe by nearly 2,000 studies from the leading scientific bodies worldwide. Included are the World Health Organization and the American Medical Association. Up to 80 percent of the food available in the United States contains genetically modified ingredients.

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The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the well-being of dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. The members of NMPF’s cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. For more on NMPF’s activities, visit our website at [www.nmpf.org](http://www.nmpf.org).