

North Devon Conservatives

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Sign up to Honest Food Campaign - as *North Devon's* shoppers deserve better

Call to change law to end misleading labelling in shops and supermarkets

Philip Milton, Conservative Prospective MP for North Devon, today urged residents across North Devon to sign up to a new petition calling for clearer labelling on food packaging.

The “Honest Food” campaign launched by Conservatives seeks to end misleading claims and ensure compulsory ‘country of origin’ labelling. This will mean that meat products, such as bacon, sausages and ready meals, which carry a British label can only use meat that comes from animals born and bred in Britain. Conservatives are proposing a change in the law to make this compulsory.

Research into everyday products on supermarket shelves has indentified Tesco chicken dinners “produced in the UK” use chicken from Thailand; Marks and Spencer’s corned beef sandwiches emblazoned with the Union flag use meat from Brazil; and goods from the Birdseye “Great British Menu” range are made with imported meat.

The petition can be signed online at: www.honestfoodcampaign.com. The campaign has been backed by famous chefs, Hugh Fernley-Whittingstall, Clarissa Dickson Wright, Prue Leith and Anthony Worrall Thompson.

Philip said:

“People have a right to know where their food comes from, but there is nothing in food labelling regulation to stop food from abroad that is only processed here from being labelled as British.

“Conservatives would change the law to prevent unclear and misleading labelling so only meat from animals reared in Britain could carry a British label. Shoppers in North Devon would see clearly where their food comes from so they can choose British food with confidence.”

Notes to Editors

Published and promoted by Sir Richard Peek on behalf of the NDCA, The Strand, Barnstaple, N. Devon
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CALLS FOR HONEST LABELLING

The Honest Food campaign aims to:

- Empower consumers to make informed choices about the food they buy.
- End misleading packaging of non-British meat or meat products being labelled as British.
- Support British producers by allowing consumers to identify genuine British meat.
- Promote superior British produce by highlighting the advantages of British produce – especially the superior welfare standards of UK food.
- Bring honesty and integrity to meat sales to restore trust and confidence in British food and labelling in general.

Campaign website: www.honestfoodcampaign.com

There is a petition at: http://www.conservatives.com/Campaigns/Honest_Food/Petition_Item.aspx

Call for mandatory country of origin labelling. Conservatives are campaigning for an overhaul of food labelling procedures to end the unclear and misleading labelling of meat. The recent food scare over contaminated Irish pork has refocused attention on inadequate food labelling in British shops. The framework legislation from the European Commission governing general food labelling is currently being revised in Brussels but EU regulations provide for compulsory origin labelling where its absence might mislead the consumer.

Proposed new law: Conservatives are to present a Food Labelling Regulations (Amendment) Bill which will make it mandatory for retailers to display the country of origin of their meat and meat products, in line with other countries, including the United States and Australia, and will also require meat and meat products labelled as British or carrying the Union flag to be born and bred in Britain.

Endorsements: The call for country of origin food labelling is supported by animal welfare and farming organisations including Compassion in World Farming, RSPCA, National Farmers' Union (NFU), Family Farmers' Association, British Pig Executive (BPEX), National Sheep Association, British Poultry Council, Country Land and Business Association, Agricultural Industries Confederation, National Pig Association and the Women's Food and Farming Union (the full text of responses are contained in the Honest Food policy brief). The Honest Food campaign has been endorsed by Hugh Fernley-Whittingstall, Clarissa Dickson Wright, Prue Leith and Anthony Worrall Thompson.

New survey shows public support clearer food labelling: A new poll commissioned by the Conservatives shows strong public support for clearer country of origin food labelling. The ICM survey found that 51 per cent believe food labelled as British indicates the meat is from an animal born and bred in Britain, when in fact this is frequently not the case. A huge majority (89 per cent) support a "born and bred" qualification for British labelling.

Current examples of poor labelling: Conservative researchers visited major supermarkets last week and found examples of unclear and misleading packaging on a range of meat products. The top five unclear or misleading products on sale were:

<i>Retailer or manufacturer</i>	<i>Product</i>	<i>Description</i>
Tesco	Chicken dinner	'Produced in UK' but chicken is from Thailand
Marks & Spencer	Corned Beef Sandwich	Emblazoned with Union flag – labelled "Nation's Favourites" – but meat is from Brazil
	Great British Menu range	Made from 'Imported Meat'

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Birdseye		
Sainsbury's	Wafer thin roast chicken	Meat 'From the UK or Brazil'
Ash Valley	Dinosaur Turkey Roll	Meat from either the UK, the EU or South America

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