

"Humane" Labeling Considered for Food

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<http://www.agandfoodlaw.com/2011/01/humane-labeling-considered-for-food.html>



Increasing customer demand to know what practices lie behind the production of their food has led to the consideration of creating a label for "humane" food. Some major supermarkets have announced they will let shoppers know about their increased animal welfare approach with labels and signs in their stores. These chains include Whole Foods and Safeway.

Creating standards for what foods can be labeled as "humane" may be expensive and lead to an increase in price for the consumer. While some consumers will be happy to pay additionally for that label,

other customers will likely have options that do not meet that heightened standard.

Food industry research group Technomic carried out a study that provided the result of how important consumers consider animal welfare. Their research showed that over 50% of consumers consider one of the most important social issues related to food to be animal welfare.

Meat products that meet the new standards for humane labeling might be labeled "Animal Welfare Approved" or "Certified Humane," while egg cartons may say "Food Alliance Certified," "United Egg Producers Certified," and "American Humane Certified." Each of these are programs that will allow a product to carry their label if their specific standards of humane treatment are met.

Critics of the programs argue that one set of standards, rather than numerous programs each with different standards, is necessary in order for consumers to understand what requirements are being met.