Take Action to Protect Your Right to Know!
Congress Debates Whether to Overturn Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) and Preempt State Mandated GMO Labeling
By Patty Lovera, Food and Water Watch

When the Senate comes back to Washington in September 2015, they will consider two critical issues that determine how much information we get about our food. This summer, the House did the wrong thing and passed bad bills on both Country of Origin labeling and GMO labeling. Now we need the Senate to stand up for consumers’ right to know.

In June, the House voted to repeal the rules for mandatory country of origin labels (COOL) for chicken, beef and pork. The House vote followed the World Trade Organization's decision that said labeling which country our food comes from is a trade barrier. But rather than wait to see how the WTO decision process plays out, the House voted to repeal the U.S. law that requires these popular common-sense labels.

And now the Senate has a bad bill of its own that would make country of origin labeling for most beef and pork voluntary. A voluntary labeling program effectively means no labeling at all, since most meat companies and retailers don’t want to provide consumers with this information. We had to fight for years to make labeling mandatory for exactly that reason.

On GMO labeling, in July the House passed the “Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act,” which many people think is better described as the Denying Americans the Right to Know (DARK) Act. This bill not only blocks states from requiring mandatory GMO labeling (including preempting laws already passed in Vermont, Maine and Connecticut) but also blocks state and local governments from enacting regulations or bans on planting GMO crops.

The Grocery Manufacturers Association, an industry group that represents Monsanto, Nestlé, Dow and Pepsi, is pushing this bill because it would let them continue to keep quiet about their production and use of GMO foods and stop the momentum the grassroots movement for GMO labeling has created at the state level.

Call the Congressional switchboard at (202) 224-3121
Ask to be connected to your Senators. Tell them to:
1.) Vote against the Senate version of HR 1599, the Safe and Affordable Food Labeling Act (aka DARK Act)
2.) Vote against any effort to repeal or weaken COOL (including making labeling voluntary)

We all have the right to know about what is in our food and where it comes from!