

THE
NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

Louisiana Laws to Limit Use of Terms “Meat, “Rice,” “Sugar” and “Milk” on Food Product Labels

Friday, June 21, 2019

- On June 11, Louisiana joined a growing number of states, including [Missouri](#) and [Arkansas](#), that have enacted legislation aimed at protecting traditional agricultural products from the growing popularity of plant-based and cell-based meat products or riced vegetables.
- Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards signed two bills into law aimed at prohibiting the use of common labeling terms on food products derived from non-traditional sources. Louisiana [Act No. 273](#), or the “Truth in Labeling” law, broadly bans the use of the terms “meat,” “rice” or “sugar” on food products derived from non-traditional sources, such as plant-based or cell-derived “meats” and cauliflower “rice.” Louisiana [Act No. 184](#) specifically targets milk product labeling, which prohibits a beverage from being labeled as “milk” unless the product comes from a cow, goat, or other hooved mammals. Both bills were sponsored by Louisiana Democratic Senator Francis Thompson, who claims that the legislation is designed to protect the Louisiana agriculture and dairy industries, as well as protect consumers from misleading labels.
- The “Truth in Labeling” law makes it unlawful to represent any food product as an agricultural product unless it meets a definition prescribed by statute, or defined historically in reference to a specific agricultural product. The law defines “meat” to mean a portion of beef, pork, poultry, alligator, farm-raised deer, turtle, domestic rabbit, crawfish, or shrimp, and does not include products derived from a plant or cell culture grown in a lab. The law also prevents use of the term “rice” unless the product contains rice, and “sugar” unless the product is derived from plant-based simple sugar or sucrose.
- The “Milk Labeling” law cross-references the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA’s) standard of identity for milk 21 C.F.R. § 131.110, defining it as “the lacteal secretion, practically free from colostrum, obtained by the complete milking of one or more healthy cows.” The law further specifies that the word “milk” is to be interpreted to include the milk of hooved mammals, such as cows, goat, sheep and water buffalo.
- The Milk Labeling Law becomes effective on August 1, 2019. The Truth in Labeling law becomes effective on October 1, 2020, with violators subject to a civil penalty of up to \$500 per day per violation.



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