

Media Release

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NZPork ramps up message on Christmas Hams

Consumers urged to buy New Zealand pork these holidays

Christmas ham shoppers received a stern reminder from NZPork today to be wary of poorly labelled imported ham.

With Christmas just around the corner, thousands of Kiwis will be shopping for the perfect ham. Due to the lack of country of origin labelling in New Zealand, confusion is still rife over where our ham is coming from, and it remains a hot topic among industry leaders and consumers alike.

"The majority of consumers prefer to buy New Zealand pork, bacon and ham – especially as their families come together from around the country to celebrate Christmas. Our main concern is that these shoppers are simply not aware of where their ham came from," says Sam McIvor, CEO of NZPork.

"In the rush to get the Christmas shopping done, we're concerned that many New Zealanders may unintentionally end up with ham from imported meat.

"Over 700,000 kilograms of imported pork products hit the shelves every week, and there is no way to know where it's from. Your ham on Christmas day could be from North America, Europe, or Australia – without country of origin labelling it's impossible to tell.

"With the majority of imported product having significantly lower animal health and welfare standards than local producers, consumers make a positive difference by choosing New Zealand ham over imports."

As New Zealand has no compulsory requirement for country of origin labelling, ham labelled 'Made in New Zealand' may in fact be imported product. The advice to Christmas shoppers when buying a last minute ham is to ask retail staff for New Zealand-raised product and to look for the 100% New Zealand ham label.

New Zealand farmers last year committed to ensuring local produce would be at the forefront of global animal welfare, as well as health, safety and environmental standards. This differentiates New Zealand bacon, ham and pork from global competitors who have made no such commitments.

"We've learnt that consumers are becoming increasingly interested in where their food comes from, and how it's produced and prepared. For this reason we support country of origin labelling, and we're helping ensure that our local produce carries the 100% New Zealand pork, bacon or ham label," adds Mr McIvor.

"The only guarantee you are buying New Zealand product this Christmas is to look for the 100% New Zealand pork, bacon and ham labels or the words 'NZ grown' – it means you're supporting our local producers as they strive to be the best little pork industry in the world," says Mr McIvor.

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