



HOUSE BILL 135: Misbranding/Cell-Cultured Meat/Env. Assess.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee: House Health. If favorable, re-refer to Commerce and Economic Development. If favorable, re-refer to Agriculture and Environment. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House **Date:** April 29, 2025

Introduced by: Reps. McNeely, Humphrey, Lowery, K. Hall **Prepared by:** Jessica Boney

Analysis of: First Edition **Staff Attorney**

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 135 would (i) prohibit misbranding of meat and poultry products by requiring the label of any manufactured -protein food product containing an identifying meat or poultry term to include an appropriate qualifying term in close proximity to the name of the product and in a specified font size, (2) prohibit community colleges, public universities, and public schools from purchasing misbranded products or cell-cultured products, and (3) establish an environmental investment assessment (EIA) of 5 cents on each item of an animal agriculture product or an analogue product sold at retail if the item bears an identifying term on the product label.*

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1.(a) would create the definitions within Article 49B of Chapter 106 (Meat Inspection Requirements; Adulteration and Misbranding) for *agricultural food animal, cell-cultured food product, close proximity, identifying meat term, insect-protein food product, plant-protein food product and qualifying term*. Any cell-cultured food product made from cells of specified animals would be added to the definition of meat food product.

Manufactured-protein food product would mean a cell-cultured food product, insect-protein food product, or plant-protein food product.

Section 1.(b) would enact **G.S. 106-549.28A** governing the labeling of manufactured-protein food products. The label of any manufactured-protein food product that contains an identifying meat term would also be required to include an appropriate qualifying term in close proximity to the name of the product in at least 20-point font or the size of the surrounded type, whichever is greater. A manufactured-protein food product that does not comply with the requirements would be deemed misbranded.

Section 1.(c) would create the same labeling requirements for poultry products as those described above.

Section 2 would prohibit community colleges, public universities, and public schools from purchasing misbranded products or cell-cultured products.

Section 3 would establish an EIA of 5 cents on each item of an animal agriculture product or an analogue product sold at retail if the item bears an identifying term on the product label. The cost is intended to be passed on to the purchaser of the item. The net proceeds of the EIAs would be credited to the trade associations proportionate to the amount of funds collected from the sale of products in each protein group.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Except as otherwise provided, this act would be effective October 1, 2025.

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