HOUSE BILL 134:
Prohibit Misbranding of Certain Food Products.

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:**	February 25, 2025
Introduced by:	Rep. Dixon	**Prepared by:**	Jessica Boney
Analysis of:	First Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: House Bill 134 would prohibit the 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.

BILL ANALYSIS: Section 1.(a) would create the following definitions within Article 49B of Chapter 106 (Meat Inspection Requirements; Adulteration and Misbranding):

- **Identifying meat term** would mean any word or phrase that states, indicates, suggests, or describes a meat product, regardless of whether the word or phrase is used individually, as a portmanteau, or as a compound word. Examples include meat, beef, veal, lamb, or pork.

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

- **Qualifying term** would mean a word, compound word, or phrase that would clearly disclose to a reasonable purchaser of meat products that a food product is not a meat product. Examples include cell-cultured, fake, grown in a lab, meat free, or vegan.

Definitions would also be created for agricultural food animal, cell-cultured food product, close proximity, insect-protein food product, and plant-protein food product. Any cell-cultured food product made from cells of specified animals would be added to the definition of meat 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 and in a specified font size.

A manufactured-protein food product that does not comply with the requirements would be deemed misbranded.

Section 2.(a) would create the following definitions within Article 49D of Chapter 106 (Poultry Products Inspection Act):

- **Identifying poultry term** would mean any word or phrase that states, indicates, suggests, or describes a poultry product, regardless of whether the word or phrase is used individually, as a portmanteau, or as a compound word. Examples include broiler, fryer, yearling, or drumstick.

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

- **Qualifying term** would mean a word, compound word, or phrase that would clearly disclose to a reasonable purchaser of poultry products that a food product is not a poultry product. Examples include cell-cultured, fake, grown in a lab, meat free, or vegan.

Definitions would also be created for cell-cultured food product, close proximity, insect-protein food product, and plant-protein food product. Any cell-cultured food product made from cells of poultry would be added to the definition of poultry product.

Section 2.(b) would add the labeling of manufactured-protein food products to **G.S. 106-549.55** (Labeling standards; false and misleading labels). The label of any manufactured-protein food product that contains an identifying poultry term would be required to include an appropriate qualifying term in close proximity to the name of the product and in a specified font size.

A manufactured-protein food product that does not comply the requirements would be deemed misbranded.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would be effective October 1, 2025, and apply to products sold or offered for sale on or after that date.