

## Plant-Based Plaintiffs Drop Mississippi Lawsuit After Favorable Resolution, but US House Reps Introduce Real MEAT Act

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On November 7, the Plant Based Foods Association (PBFA) and Upton's Naturals [dropped](#) their federal lawsuit challenging Mississippi's legislation that banned plant-based foods sold in Mississippi from using meat-related terms on labels, after Mississippi proposed new regulations. As our readers may [recall](#), in early September, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce proposed new regulations to implement the law that would allow the use of meat-related terms on the labels of plant-based food if one or more of the following terms, or a comparable qualifier, is prominently displayed on the front of the package: "meat free," "meatless," "plant-based," "veggie-based," "made from plants," "vegetarian," or "vegan." PBFA and Upton's dropped the lawsuit on the same day the revised labeling regulations took effect.

PBFA and Upton's lead attorney, Justin Pearson of the Institute for Justice, called the outcome a "total victory" and [stated](#) that the PBFA and Upton's "simply wanted to continue using clear labels with the terms consumers understand best. In response to our lawsuit, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture has done the right thing, so there is no need to move forward with the lawsuit."

While the Mississippi lawsuit has been dropped, countless other state suits [continue on](#). And at the federal level, plant-based products face a new potential labeling barrier. U.S. House of Representatives Anthony Brindisi (D-NY) and Roger Marshall (R-KS) introduced the Real Marketing Edible Artificials Truthfully (MEAT) Act of 2019 (H.R. 4881). The [Real MEAT Act](#) would amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to "ensure that consumers can make informed decisions in choosing between meat products such as beef and imitation meat products." The Act states that "any imitation meat food product, beef, or beef product, shall be deemed to be misbranded unless its label bears, in type of uniform size and prominence, the word 'imitation' immediately before or after the name of the food and a statement that clearly indicates the product is not derived from or does not contain meat." The bill alleges that imitation products create confusion in the marketplace. The Real MEAT Act was [introduced](#) on October 28, 2019 and has been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Agriculture. We will continue to report on any developments of the Real MEAT Act and other developments that impact the labeling of plant-based foods and meat products.

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