

## Are plant-based proteins 'meat'? Dueling food companies face off over labeling rules

A fierce constitutional fight is under way over how to label “veggie bacon” and other food items that use meat substitutes. The legal battle pits leading purveyors from the rapidly emerging fake meat industry, flanked by civil liberties advocates, against a number of U.S. states and agriculture industry interests.

In the latest skirmish, alternative meat manufacturer Tofurky [in July] sued Arkansas for passing a new labeling law that bars makers of plant-based food from using terms like veggie bacon, “cauliflower rice” and “almond milk.” The Oregon company .... said in its complaint that the law infringes on free-speech liberties and unfairly protects the state’s meat and rice industries ....

Civil liberties lawyers argue that the law is “unconstitutionally vague,” encouraging arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement. Supporters of alternative foods also say it prevents consumers from getting truthful information about products.

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Agriculture industry representatives say fake meat companies’ success mimicking the taste and sensory experience of real meat makes it important for consumers to know exactly what they’re eating.

“We want to make it clear for Arkansans to understand what’s in their purchase,” said Lauren Ward, executive director at the Arkansas Rice Federation, a trade group that backed the state’s new labeling law.

**Read full, original article:** [Purveyors of fake and real meat are going for blood in legal fights over labeling](#)