Harvard Law School urges USDA to allow 'usual meat and poultry terms' in labeling of cell-based foods

In some action on the petition front, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) acknowledges a request from the Harvard Law School's "Animal Law and Policy Clinic."

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Harvard wants FSIS to adopt a labeling approach for "cell-based" meat and poultry products that respects First Amendment commercial speech protections.

"The (Harvard) letter specifically requests that FSIS establish a labeling approach for cell-based meat and poultry that does not require new standards of identity and does not ban the use of common or usual meat and poultry terms specified in standards of identify," the FSIS confirmation letter says.

"The (Harvard) letter asserts that FSIS should wait until the agency has a better understanding of the compositional and safety characteristics of finished cell-based meat products, and until it has had the opportunity to review proposed labels, before establishing speech restrictions that could raise constitutional questions," FSIS says.

FSIS said the Harvard request was being considered as a rulemaking petition and referred to the Office of Policy and Program Development.

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