

to all these products, but it will also permit inspectors to examine, analyse and take regulatory action as required.

This will ensure that imported food products are safe, wholesome and free of contaminants for the Canadian consumer. This is something that Canadians have come to expect from their government, and we have committed ourselves to this endeavour.

In addition to the Canada Agricultural Products Act, many provincial laws regulate the sale of fresh fruits and vegetables at the retail level and call for country of origin labelling. For example, Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the Ontario Farm Products Grades and Sales Act and regulations state that there must be a declaration of country of origin on all fresh fruits and vegetables sold in bulk at the retail level. Sections 18, 19, 21 and 22 of the Quebec regulations contain the same requirements. There is also Section 7 of the Fruit and Vegetable Sales Act, Regulation 222/84 in Manitoba; Section 7 of the B.C. fruit and vegetable regulations; as well as Section 11 of the Natural Products Grades Act, Regulations 81-56, are administered by the province of New Brunswick.

We do not disagree with the idea of Bill C-222. Canadians should be informed about where their fresh produce is grown. But the fact is we do not need to amend this legislation. The right of Canadians to know is already fully protected by existing federal and provincial laws and regulations.

[Translation]

**Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester):** Mr. Speaker, as assistant critic for Consumer and Corporate Affairs, I am pleased to speak on this bill, since I am extremely interested in regulations on labelling.

[English]

Bill C-222 is a Private Members' Bill to amend the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act of 1936. The act does not provide for the country of origin, something that is extremely important for Canadian consumers. The Canadian consumer is now extremely learned.

[Translation]

He knows what he wants, he knows his product. Canadians today are aware of chemicals, they know about pesticides and they would like to know what there is or what was used that could affect the fruit, vegetables and honey sold.

### *Private Members' Business*

The proposal—

[English]

The bill proposes:

No person shall sell or offer for sale any produce unless the country of origin is shown clearly and legibly on the produce or the packaging thereof or on a sign placed near the produce.

[Translation]

I find this proposal very reasonable. It refers to legislation—

[English]

—a law which is soon to be repealed, the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act, which does not talk of the country of origin as far as labelling is concerned.

In the case of there being no grade established, there is tropical fruit, for example, which comes into the country ungraded and, therefore, unregulated.

As the member who spoke before me said, there was an act passed in 1986 called the Canada Agricultural Products Standards Act, but this particular act does not cover ungraded produce. For example, Canadian apples are regulated and graded. If apples come from outside the country, they would be similarly graded. But there is produce that comes from other countries, is not grown in Canada, and does not need to be graded. Therefore, it is not marked as to the country of origin.

I would also like to refer to the basic labelling requirements under the Food and Drugs Act and the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act. While country of origin is required on such items as clothing, it is not required for food. Food is extremely important for the Canadian consumer. We are not any longer the consumer of the 1930s. The consumer of the 1990s is extremely literate and aware of the affects of pesticides and chemicals in food or on food. As a very literate consumer community, we want to know what is in the food, what has touched the food, and where the food comes from. It is a reasonable amendment to ask that the country of origin be included.

Perhaps the member should have added to the labelling requirements the question of meat. One million pounds of beef comes into the country in carcass or package form that is not graded. It is not marked as to the country of origin. This has resulted in the destruction