

FTC Consumer Alert

Federal Trade Commission ■ Bureau of Consumer Protection ■ Office of Consumer and Business Education

FTC Explains ‘Made in USA’ Standard To Confirm Consumer Confidence

In the aftermath of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, news reports suggest that more American consumers are seeking out products that are “Made in the USA” with the expectation that the claim is truthful and accurate.

According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), “Made in USA” means that “all or virtually all” the product was, indeed, made in America. The agency enforces the standard to ensure commercial compliance and confirm consumer confidence.

For a “Made in USA” claim to be accurate, all significant parts, processing and labor that go into the product must be of U.S. origin. Products should not contain any — or only negligible — foreign content.

According to FTC officials, there’s no law that requires manufacturers and marketers of most products to disclose U.S. content. In fact, except for automobiles and textile and wool products, it’s a manufacturer or advertiser’s choice to say whether a product is domestic. But those who choose to make the claim must adhere to the “all or virtually all” standard.

While the FTC enforces the “Made in USA” standard, it’s the U.S. Customs Service that oversees the requirements that imported goods be marked with a foreign country of origin (for example, “Made in Japan”).

If you believe that a product is being erroneously promoted as “Made in USA” because it wasn’t — or because it contains significant foreign parts or processing — call the FTC. The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit www.ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.

If you are aware of import or export fraud, call the U.S. Customs Service Commercial Fraud Hotline, 1-800-ITS-FAKE.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION	FOR THE CONSUMER
1-877-FTC-HELP	www.ftc.gov

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