



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

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BAUCUS: NEW USDA REPORT, SAFEGUARDS SHOULD PUSH JAPAN TO REOPEN MARKETS TO U.S. BEEF

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Ranking Democrat on the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, again today urged Japan to resume imports of U.S. beef following the release of a new report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA reported today on its investigation into a veal shipment to Japan that was ineligible for shipment under the U.S.-Japan beef agreement, and provided a list of important new actions that the Department will take to ensure that no such incident occurs again, including stepped-up training and certification.

“USDA's comprehensive investigation and report goes above and beyond the call of duty,” said Baucus. **“It was created in response to an incident that – while inexcusable – posed zero risk to human or animal health. We have gone to great lengths to allay Japanese concerns here. And I expect Japan to go to great lengths to resume trade in safe, high-quality beef from Montana and the United States as quickly as possible.”**

On December 12, Japan lifted its two-year old ban on U.S. beef from cattle less than 20 months of age. International standards recognize the safety of beef from cattle less than 30 months of age. On January 20, Japan again suspended imports of U.S. beef after a shipment of Japan-bound veal was found to contain a backbone, which was contrary to the U.S.-Japan agreement on beef trade. The backbone at issue posed no risk to human health.

“Secretary Johanns and his team have issued a thorough report,” said Baucus. **“In 475 pages, it describes the facts behind the ineligible veal shipment to Japan and bolsters the safeguards in place to ensure strict compliance with our agreement with Japan. I expect this report to provide a solid basis for Japan to resume beef imports in the immediate future.”**

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