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BAUCUS PLEASED KOREA WILL RESUME IMPORTS OF SOME U.S BEEF

Senator views today's announcement by Korea an important first step toward resuming full beef trade

Washington, DC –U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, welcomed Korea's announcement today that it will allow shipments of U.S. boneless beef from cattle less than 30 months. Prior to the suspension of trade in December 2003, Korea was a major market for U.S. beef, with exports exceeding $814 million in that year.

"I am pleased that Korea will allow exports of U.S. boneless beef to resume. This means that U.S. beef products will now be available in all the major markets in Asia, traditionally the top export destination for our beef," said Baucus. **"I am sure that Korean consumers are also pleased that they will now be able to enjoy delicious Montana beef again."**

Korean and U.S. officials reached an agreement on the conditions for restarting trade earlier this year, and have now finalized the technical measures at U.S. beef plants that export to Korea. Senator Baucus has played a lead role in pressing Korea to lift its restrictions on U.S. beef in discussions with the Korean Trade Minister, Ambassador and other officials. Baucus recently wrote to Korean President Roh urging him to facilitate the re-opening of this important market for U.S. beef.

"Our Korean partners are fully aware how important beef trade is in our bilateral trade relationship, including the proposed U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement. They have taken a first step, but it is only a first step," stressed Baucus. **"It is imperative that Korea follow sound science and resume imports of the full range of U.S. beef products to Korea, consistent with international standards. The scientific evidence is clear in this regard - all U.S. beef – regardless of age and whether boneless, bone-in, or offals – is safe."**

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