

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As Senators from states where beef production is an integral part of our state economies, we are extremely concerned about China's continued ban on beef and beef products. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has implemented new, scientifically sound bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) controls since the first case of BSE was found in the U.S. over two years ago. These new procedures work in conjunction with other BSE controls and have continued to prove that U.S. beef is the safest in the world. Therefore, we believe that the upcoming meetings between the U.S. and China present a unique opportunity to advocate for the fair treatment of America's beef and beef products in the Chinese market.

Prior to the ban, China was the seventh-largest export market for U.S. beef and beef product and continues to hold great potential as a market in the future. This continued ban on U.S. beef is not justified, and there is no scientific evidence to suggest that our products should be prohibited from international trade.

Recently, the Chinese have agreed to discuss the potential for reopening their markets to U.S. beef with U.S. government officials. As a result, the Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade meeting in early April will provide an ideal forum to address this issue. Furthermore, President Hu Jintao's state visit later in the month presents yet another significant opportunity to resolve this matter.

We are looking for firm results in order to be able to fully export U.S. beef to China as soon as possible. Making the resumption of trade one of your economic priorities at these meetings will send a clear signal regarding the importance of resolving this issue and reopening this market as soon as possible.

Mr. President, we thank you for your Administration's efforts on working to reopen many important markets to U.S. beef exports. Please help us continue this process by making U.S. beef trade with China an economic priority.

Thank you in advance for your immediate consideration of this request.

Sam Brownback

Ken Salazar

Max Baccus

Pat Hill

Sammy Bunn

Craig Thomas

Jim Talent

Art Bond

Kent Larned

John Cougan

Byron LaSage

Ed Johnson

Mike Cryo

Wayne Alford

Jim Hife

Mike Deline

Bill Nelson

Max Pryor

R Wyder

Jeff

Sally Hamblin