

12/12/2005 Moran and Roberts Applaud Japan's Decision to Open Markets to U.S. Beef

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senator Pat Roberts and U.S. Congressman Jerry Moran today applauded the long overdue decision by the Japanese government to reopen their market to U.S. beef.

Senator Roberts said, "This is great news for Kansas producers at the holidays. American Beef, its what's for Christmas dinner in Japan. I am glad we were able to convince the Japanese to base their trade policy on sound science and recognize the quality and safety of U.S. Beef. We must now remain diligent to ensure that the Japanese resume imports in a manner that is quick and consistent with the agreement between our two countries. We must also continue efforts to reopen all international markets to United States beef."

"After two years of negotiations, the lifting of this unscientific ban allows Kansas producers and American agriculture to regain access to this important market," Moran said. "The Japanese people can be confident the beef they have imported from the U.S. is among the safest in the world. This promising development is a step toward greater market access in Japan, as we continue working to expand the sale of Kansas products in the global market."

At issue was the continued delay by the Japanese government in resuming normal beef trade, based on internationally recognized science, with the U.S.

Senator Roberts and Congressman Moran each introduced legislation to impose tariffs on Japanese products if beef trade was not resumed. Other efforts by Roberts and Moran have included meetings with President Bush, the Japanese Ambassador, the U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Senator Roberts and Congressman Moran commend Secretary Mike Johanns and U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Robert Portman for their commitment to resolving this difficult issue.

According to USDA, the United States is now able to export beef from cattle 20 months of age and younger to Japan. More than 94 percent of total U.S. ruminant and ruminant products, with a total export value of \$1.7 billion in 2003, are now eligible for export to Japan. In 2003, the United States exported \$1.4 billion worth of beef and beef products to Japan. Prior to the December 2003 discovery of the first BSE-infected cow in the United States, the U.S. exported beef and beef products to 119 countries. With the opening of Japan, 70 countries have now established trade to at least selected U.S. beef and beef products.

The beef industry is one of the largest industries in Kansas - representing over \$5 billion in annual revenue. Kansas has 6.65 million head of cattle. In 2003, cattle represented 62 percent of the Kansas agricultural cash receipts and the processing industry alone employs over 18,700 Kansans.

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