



For Immediate Release  
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Contact: Carol Guthrie (Baucus)  
Jill Gerber (Grassley)  
(202) 224-4515

## **BAUCUS, GRASSLEY WARN TAIWAN AGAINST BLOCKING U.S. BEEF, PORK IMPORTS**

*Finance leaders say Taiwan's unscientific bans may violate WTO trade rules*

*Washington, DC* – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) today expressed their strong concern about Taiwan's efforts to block perfectly safe imports of American farm products, particularly beef and pork. In a letter to Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou, Baucus and Grassley reminded the Taiwanese government of the safety of these products, and said that continued blocking of beef and pork imports by Taiwan may constitute a violation of World Trade Organization agreements.

**"Taiwan wanted to join the WTO, and now they need to abide by WTO rules,"** said Baucus. **"Taiwan cannot be allowed to close its doors to American farm products on the basis of bogus safety concerns. American beef and pork are the safest in the world, and Taiwan has no legitimate excuse for blocking their import. We fully expect Taiwan's government to remedy this problem and open Taiwan to safe, delicious American beef and pork without delay."**

**"Taiwan is manipulating food safety requirements with non-scientific restrictions in order to keep safe U.S. ag products out of its market in a way that probably violates WTO rules. Taiwan won't be able to maintain a healthy economic relationship with the United States unless it treats U.S. products fairly,"** Grassley said.

The text of the Senators' letter follows here.

November 19, 2008

President Ma Ying-jeou  
Taipei City 10048, Taiwan  
Republic of China

Dear President Ma:

- more -

We are writing to express our deep concern regarding continued Taiwanese barriers to U.S. agricultural products. As supporters of Taiwan, we are concerned that mounting trade barriers could undermine the U.S.-Taiwan economic relationship.

U.S. agricultural producers face an array of barriers to American farm products in Taiwan. Nearly five years ago, Taiwan's Department of Health (DOH) banned imports of American beef because of concerns about bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Since that time, the United States has adopted comprehensive control measures for BSE and the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) has determined that all cuts of American beef, from animals of all ages, are safe. While Taiwan has resumed importing boneless beef from cattle under 30 months of age, it still has not complied with the OIE's findings to accept all U.S. beef.

Taiwan also restricts imports of U.S. pork due to spurious and non-scientific concerns about ractopamine. Ractopamine has been approved for use in the United States since 1999 and is registered for use in 26 countries. The *Codex Alimentarius*, which sets international standards for food safety, has established draft maximum residue limits (MRLs) for ractopamine. Although DOH notified the WTO that it was prepared to adopt the draft *Codex* MRL for ractopamine in August 2007, it later reversed its decision in response to protests by Taiwanese farmers opposing imports of U.S. pork. We are concerned that Taiwan's *de facto* ban on U.S. pork containing traces of this feed additive remains in place, despite the lack of scientific evidence to support this ban.

We were proponents of Taiwan's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). It is troubling that Taiwan is engaging in repeated abuses of food safety requirements designed to exclude U.S. agricultural imports from your market – actions that may violate WTO rules.

We urge Taiwan to immediately remove all barriers to American farm products, beginning with Taiwan's non-scientific restrictions on U.S. beef and ractopamine-treated pork. To maintain its status as a strong, consistent economic partner with the United States, Taiwan must treat U.S. products fairly.

Sincerely,

Max Baucus  
Chairman

Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member

cc: Representative Jason Yuan, Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office  
Dr. Su Chi, Secretary General, Taiwan National Security Council

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