



For Immediate Release
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BAUCUS, LINCOLN, JOHANNIS INTRODUCE RESOLUTION URGING FULL MARKET ACCESS FOR U.S. BEEF

*Senate Resolution Calls on China, Japan, South Korea, Others
to Fully Open Markets to All U.S. Beef*

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.) and Senator Mike Johanns (R-Neb.) introduced a Senate Resolution today urging China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Mexico and Vietnam to follow international guidelines and provide full market access to all U.S. beef products. Today's resolution is part of the Senators' longstanding fight to open foreign markets for American ranchers and farmers to sell their world class products.

"Access to the global market for U.S. goods, including beef and other agricultural commodities, is essential to increasing American exports and expediting our economic recovery," Baucus said. **"American beef is world-class and there is absolutely no scientific basis for any country to restrict it. These unfounded and unscientific barriers are impeding our economic recovery and hurting hardworking ranchers in Montana and across the United States. I strongly urge all countries to follow international guidelines, which have certified U.S. beef as safe, and open their markets to American ranchers and farmers immediately."**

"American beef producers must meet the highest standards of beef production in the world and they deserve the opportunity to compete on a level playing field. Due in large part to unfair trade barriers in our export markets, American beef producers have lost an average of \$1.4 billion annually since 2003, despite the fact that internationally recognized sound science tells us our product is safe. This resolution calls on those countries, particularly in Asia, to play by the same rules we use. Asia continues to hold the greatest growth potential in market access for American beef exports, and it's time for these non-tariff trade barriers to be brought down," Lincoln said.

"The United States leads the way in following internationally recognized, science-based standards and treats its trading partners fairly," Johanns said. **"We've been beyond patient in waiting for fair treatment in return. American beef and beef products have been scientifically proven to be safe for consumption; there is absolutely no justification for banning U.S. beef. It is well past time for these countries to live up to their end of our good-faith trade agreements."**

In 2003, U.S. beef exports to the countries named in today's resolution were valued at more than \$3 billion. But since these countries began restricting U.S. beef, exports declined sharply, causing significant revenue losses for American cattle producers. Between 2004 and 2009, for example, annual U.S. beef exports to Japan and South Korea averaged less than 15 percent of their 2003 levels.

U.S. beef has been certified safe by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), which is the internationally recognized standard-setting body for animal food products. Likewise, a 2006 study by the United States Department of Agriculture found bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), the disease in question, to be virtually nonexistent in the United States.

However, China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Mexico and Vietnam continue to restrict U.S. beef, despite that fact that the United States has implemented a rigorous, multilayered system of safeguards and U.S. beef continues to meet international safety standards.

Baucus, Lincoln and Johanns have been staunch advocates for U.S. cattle producers in the fight for full access to global markets and today's resolution also calls on President Obama to press these countries to open their markets to U.S. beef.

Complete text of today's resolution is available at:

<http://finance.senate.gov/legislation/details/?id=8668efb7-5056-a032-52be-9e61b1b095bf>.

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