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MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors  
Re: International designation of U.S. beef as safe  
Da: Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Sen. Chuck Grassley, ranking member of the Committee on Finance, made the following comment after today's announcement by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) classifying the United States as a "controlled risk" country with regard to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). By designating the United States as a "controlled risk" country, the OIE recognizes that U.S. cattle of all ages, and U.S. boneless and bone-in beef derived from cattle of all ages, can be traded safely due to safeguards undertaken by the United States. OIE classifications are benchmark standards for food safety at the World Trade Organization.

"I'm pleased, but not surprised, by this announcement. The OIE looked at the scientific evidence and made the obvious conclusion – U.S. beef is safe. Given that millions of Americans eat U.S. beef every day, the safety of U.S. beef was never really in doubt anyway. But with this international scientific organization explicitly confirming the obvious, other countries now will be hard-pressed to continue their excuses for restricting – or even banning – the importation of U.S. beef. I look forward to our trading partners, including Korea, Japan, and China, acting quickly to remove their scientifically unjustified barriers to the importation of U.S. beef."