

United States Senate

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December 19, 2011

Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba
Embassy of the United Arab Emirates
3522 International Court, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC, 20008

Dear Ambassador Al Otaiba,

I am writing today regarding policies your government recently adopted that prohibit the importation of U.S. beef from cattle over 30 months of age. The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) has found U.S. beef of all ages and cuts safe to export, and until 2009, our ranchers enjoyed full access to your market. Your current prohibition is scientifically unjustified, and I urge you to fully open your market without delay.

I understand our governments have met multiple times on this issue. It is important for this dialogue to continue, as the restrictions have negatively affected our producers. From 2004-2008, U.S. beef exports to the UAE grew by an average of 55 percent annually, making the UAE our second biggest market in the Middle East. In 2009, the year the restrictions were put in place, growth halted and our export levels dropped. And while sales rebounded last year, our true market potential will not be realized until these policies are lifted. Markets rise and fall for a great number of reasons, but fluctuations caused by unscientific barriers are unacceptable.

The beef industry is important to my home state of Montana, and I proudly stand behind the quality and safety of their product. I encourage you to take a close look at this issue and to resolve it in a manner consistent with the findings of the OIE.

Sincerely,



Max Baucus