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BAUCUS SECURES VICTORY FOR AMERICA'S RANCHERS AS JAPAN ACCEPTS MORE U.S. BEEF EXPORTS

Senator Pressed Japanese Leaders on Unscientific Beef Restrictions during Trade Mission Last Year

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today hailed Japan's decision to import more U.S. beef by opening its market to cattle up to 30 months of age. For several years, Japan has only accepted cattle less than 21 months of age. The news follows a trade mission Senator Baucus took to Tokyo last summer, [where he pressed Japan's prime minister](#) and economic and trade leaders to bring Japan's policies in line with sound science and accept more U.S. beef.

"This is a win for ranchers in Montana and across the country and will mean more exports and more jobs here in the U.S.," Senator Baucus said. **"Japan is a huge market for our beef exports, and I'm thrilled it's finally taken a big step toward accepting sound science and welcoming more of our exports. The simple fact is American beef is among the safest in the world, and the next step is for Japan to drop age-based limits altogether."**

Japan was once the largest market for U.S. beef, with nearly \$1.5 billion worth of exports sold there in 2000, according to the Department of Agriculture (USDA). But it banned beef from U.S. cattle in 2003 when one case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was discovered in the U.S. Since then, the USDA and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) have declared that U.S. beef – including cattle of all ages – is completely safe for consumption.

Japan re-opened its market to American beef in 2005, but with the 21-month age limit in place. Since collapsing after the ban, exports have rebounded to nearly \$1 billion in 2012. Japan is now the third-largest export market for U.S. beef after Mexico and Canada, according to USDA estimates. Japan's decision today to accept more cattle will further increase opportunities for U.S. ranchers to boost exports to Japan.

Senator Baucus has a long track record of fighting on behalf of American beef exporters. He immediately pressed Russia [to reconsider limiting U.S. beef exports](#) when it announced the plan last month. And thanks to [the bill he championed](#) normalizing trade relations with Russia, the U.S. now has new tools to resolve that type of trade dispute. While [meeting with European](#) leaders on economic issues last fall, Senator Baucus urged them to bring their policies in line with sound science and accept more U.S. agricultural products, including beef. He [worked with the administration](#) to secure [a commitment from South Korea](#) to accept more U.S. beef as part of the U.S.-Korea free trade agreement, which went into effect last March. He [has consistently](#) called [on China](#) to end [its restrictions](#) on [beef exports](#), including [during a trade mission](#) when he met with then-Vice President Xi Jinping. And the [United Arab Emirates](#), [Taiwan](#) and [Chile](#) all recently dropped limits on U.S. beef exports after Senator Baucus pushed them to do so.

The Finance Committee has jurisdiction over international trade matters.

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