

Delegates press Japan to open U.S. beef borders

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each month market closed

STAFF REPORTS

Colorado Congressional delegates continue to press Japan to open its borders to U.S. beef.

U.S. Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, R-Colo., met with Japanese Ambassador Ryozo Kato earlier this week regarding ending the continued embargo on American beef products, which were put in place two years ago following a single confirmed case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy found in a Canadian born cow in Washington state.

"During our discussion, I expressed to Ambassador Kato my frustration over the continued delays of the Japanese Food Safety Commission. Our region of Colorado has the reputation for supplying the best quality beef in the world. Even though the United States cattlemen have met the demands of the Japanese by using internationally recognized science, Japan continues to act unreasonably. It is long past the time for them to stop," Musgrave said.

Meanwhile, Sen. Ken Salazar, D-Colo., signed on to a bipartisan, strongly-worded letter to U.S. Trade Representative Robert Portman urging him to consider the use of increased economic pressure against Japan. Musgrave also signed the letter, as did Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo.

"I have repeatedly been in touch with the administration and the Japanese ambassador, and still no progress has been made. Now we must toughen our stance to encourage the Japanese government to open its markets or face consequences," Salazar said.

The American beef industry loses \$100 million each month the Japanese market remains closed. Colorado ranks fourth in cash receipts for cattle and calves in the nation, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Tribune
Oct. 8, 2005
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