



EMBASSY OF JAPAN  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

October 24, 2005

Dear Chairman Chambliss:

I appreciate your continued interest in the issue of beef trade between Japan and the United States. I would like to inform you about the most recent development toward resumption of import of US beef.

On October 24, the Expert Committee on Prions (Committee), a sub-committee of the Food Safety Commission of Japan (FSC), considered a draft document which concludes that the difference in the BSE risk-level of U.S. beef imported under the conditions in the export program for Japan and that of beef processed in Japan is very small. The Chairman of the Committee explained after the meeting that they will discuss once again and try to finalize the draft document. The next meeting of the Committee is expected to be held next week.

Once the Committee adopts its conclusion, it can be said that the scientific evaluation has practically been made, and import of US beef will resume upon completion of the following procedural steps.

- The FSC will decide at its immediate next plenary session to put that conclusion to a public comment procedure of four weeks.
- The FSC will consider the comments by the public for a week.
- The FSC will officially adopt the conclusion of the Committee and report to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
- The Ministries will hold several explanation sessions to the public as necessary.
- The Japanese Government and the US Government will officially reconfirm the conditions that are included in the Joint Press Statement of October 23, 2004.
- The Japanese Government will notify the conditions to its quarantine and animal quarantine offices, importers and other persons concerned.
- Import of US beef will resume under these conditions.

The Japanese Government is determined to make efforts to secure the positive conclusion of the issue. I thank you for your continued understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ryozo Kato  
Ambassador of Japan

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss  
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510