

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 9, 2021

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C., 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We write to express support for the cattle industry's recent requests for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to immediately suspend fresh beef imports from Brazil.

As you know, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) is a significant concern for cattle producers and consumers, and the United States has gone to great lengths to put in place extensive interlocking safeguards to ensure our cattle producers and consumers are protected from this devastating disease. In 2017, Brazilian fresh beef imports were suspended due to food safety concerns, and unfortunately, USDA allowed these imports to resume in 2020.

Due to a lengthy delay in the reporting of two recent atypical BSE cases, we have concerns that these events are evidence that Brazil may lack credible animal health and food safety systems. While health officials state these two atypical BSE cases arose spontaneously in the infected cattle, Brazil's irresponsible behavior may pose a significant threat to the health and safety of the U.S. cattle herd.


We believe these concerns warrant the immediate suspension of Brazil's fresh beef imports until a thorough review can be performed by USDA and livestock producers can be assured that Brazilian beef does not place our herds or consumers at risk from BSE or other potentially devastating livestock diseases.

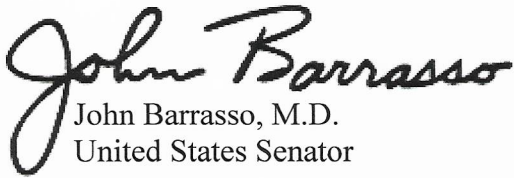
Cattle producers across the country work hard to produce the highest quality beef in the world. This industry should not be jeopardized by Brazilian beef imports that may contaminate U.S. herds and our food supply.


We support the requests to suspend Brazilian fresh beef imports until a thorough investigation can be made into Brazil's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food Supply food safety review process. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



John Thune
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator


John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator


Cory A. Booker
United States Senator


Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator


Kevin Cramer
United States Senator


Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator


Jon Tester
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Deb Fischer
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Tina Smith
United States Senator


Cynthia M. Lummis
United States Senator


Raphael G. Warnock
United States Senator


John Hoeven
United States Senator


M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator