

USDA Releases Statement Regarding the Passage of Joint Resolution 4 in the United States Senate Extending the Ban on Imports of Canadian Cattle into the U.S.

Last Thursday, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released the following statement in response to the passage of Joint Resolution 4 by the United States Senate, which strikes down a USDA regulation that would have lifted the 22-month ban on the importation of Canadian live cattle into the U.S.

According to published news reports, President George W. Bush has threatened to veto the resolution if it also passes the U.S. House of Representatives. If the resolution were vetoed, it would return to the U.S. Senate, where a two-thirds majority would be needed to override the presidential veto.

 **STATEMENT**

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Statement By Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns Regarding The Passage Of S.J.Res. 4 By The United States Senate

March 3, 2005

"I am very disappointed in today's vote by the United States Senate to disapprove the rule submitted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to establish minimal risk regions and resume trade in Canadian beef and cattle under 30 months of age.

"Today's action undermines the U.S. efforts to promote science-based regulations, complicates U.S. negotiations to reopen foreign markets to U.S. beef and would perpetuate the economic disruption of the beef and cattle industry.

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"USDA remains confident that the requirements of the minimal-risk rule, in combination with the animal and public health measures already in place in the United States and Canada, provide the utmost protection to both U.S. consumers and livestock. We also remain fully confident in the underlying risk assessment, developed in accordance with the OIE guidelines, which determined Canada to be a minimal risk region.

"I will now work with the U.S. House of Representatives to prevent passage of this resolution, which is strongly opposed by the Bush Administration, and continue our aggressive efforts to reopen international markets to U.S. beef."