



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jess Peterson 202/870-3867

July 17, 2008

Senate Appropriations Committee **Approves FMD Bill**

USCA (July 17, 2008) – The Senate Appropriations Committee today passed the “Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention Act of 2008” as an amendment to the FY 2009 Agriculture Appropriations bill. This would prevent the USDA from spending any money to implement the plan in Fiscal Year 2009 to open U.S. borders to import fresh meat and livestock from Argentina.

Leo McDonnell, Director Emeritus, with the U.S. Cattlemen’s Association (USCA), made the following statement:

“Today is a great day for America’s ranchers because we’re a little bit safer today from FMD—the livestock disease we fear more than any other. But there’s still work to be done, and cattle producers need to stay engaged until this bill becomes law.

“The livestock industry owes a big debt of gratitude to Senators Tim Johnson (D-SD) and Mike Enzi (R-WY) for leading this effort, and we also want to thank the numerous lawmakers who have co-sponsored the bill. Representatives Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D-SD) and Barbara Cubin (R-WY) also deserve recognition for leading the charge on the House side.

“These leaders sent a clear signal today. They said ‘America is FMD free, Argentina is not, and we want to keep it that way.’ They also sent a clear message to Argentina that the time has come for that country to clean up its act.

“Argentina has not been a responsible neighbor. They have not put into place proper disease control measures and they have not looked out for the best interests of rural America—whether they are siding against us in the WTO or refusing to repay loans made by U.S. businesses and taxpayers.

“Risking the introduction of FMD into the U.S makes no sense. With the current economic setting its unthinkable that this proposal is still pending. It’s great see that Foot and Mouth Prevention Act of 2008 has gained broad support since its introduction. Besides USCA, the bill is also backed by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the National Farmers Union, and the American Sheep Institute.

Cosponsors of the Senate bill include Sens. Jon Tester (D-MT), John Barrasso (R-WY), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Pete Domenici (R-NM), Byron Dorgan (D-ND), Wayne Allard (R-CO), Ken Salazar (D-CO), John Thune (R-SD), Ben Nelson (D-NE), Richard Durbin (D-IL), and Kent Conrad (D-ND).

Cosponsors of the House companion, which was introduced yesterday, include Reps. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), Nancy Boyda (D-KS), Steve Kagen (D-WI), and Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA).

Established in March 2007, USCA is committed to concentrating its efforts in Washington, DC to enhance and expand the cattle industry’s voice on Capitol Hill. USCA has a full-time presence in Washington, giving cattle producers across the country a strong influence on policy development. For more information go to www.uscattlemen.org <<http://www.uscattlemen.org>> .