

Dec. 4, 2007

The Honorable Pat Roberts
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Roberts,

On behalf of the Kansas Cattlemen's Association, I want to make sure that you are aware of a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) study recently released by your alma mater.

According to researchers at Kansas State University, A FMD outbreak in the state could cost Kansas \$945 million. If you want to see the entire study, it can be found in the October issue of the Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics.

This study is of particular interest now as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is considering regionalized beef trade with Argentina despite that country's documented FMD cases. USDA first mentioned its plan to allow imports of beef from "safe zones" in Argentina in a January Federal Register notice. This action almost went unnoticed, but ranchers learned of these plans and are now growing very concerned and outspoken.

A major FMD outbreak would destroy our country's livestock industry, and it is amazing that USDA would even take a chance on such a catastrophic event by allowing imports from a country with FMD.

USDA will insist that the areas from which we import would be safe. But, USDA has never explained how they would control a highly-infectious disease spread by air with imaginary borders. And, they have never explained how we can trust Argentina not to transship beef from "unsafe zones." After all, this is a country that defaults on U.S. loans and routinely fights U.S. farmers in the World Trade Organization.

Nearly one year after first being issued, this proposed rule is still pending. Kansas cattlemen urge you to please contact USDA to voice your concern over this rule and insist that it be immediately withdrawn.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and are available if you or your staff have any questions.

Sincerely,

Brandy Carter
Kansas Cattlemen's Association