

Wayne Allard

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SENATOR ALLARD PERSUADES JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO MEET ON OPENING BORDERS TO AMERICAN BEEF

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) announced Tuesday that he has been able to get Japan's Ambassador to the United States, Ryozo Kato, to agree to meet with a delegation of U.S. Senators to discuss a lifting of the Japanese embargo on U.S. beef. The meeting is scheduled to take place on Friday, March 11.

“We are going to make our case that a single case of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) should not continue to be a reason for the entire Japanese market to be closed to America's beef exports,” Senator Allard said. “This took a lot of negotiation, but Ambassador Kato has had a change of heart. I am pleased that finally the ambassador has agreed to this meeting, after declining numerous similar invitations in the past.”

“In 2003, U.S. exports of beef to Japan totaled over a billion dollars,” Senator Allard said. “Since the solitary case of BSE was discovered in December of 2003, the U.S. government has worked diligently to take the necessary steps to earn the confidence of the Japanese government public, in many respects exceeding internationally established scientific requirements.”

“Industries and entire communities across America are experiencing hardship – if not downright disaster – from the closing of the Japanese market,” Senator Allard said. “We have acted in good faith, but if the government of Japan does not act soon to lift its sanctions, Congress may choose to pursue retaliatory action. Now that the ambassador has agreed to a meeting, I am optimistic that such an unfortunate outcome may be avoided.”

On February 24, 20 U.S. Senators joined Senator Allard in signing a letter to the Japanese ambassador asking for Japan to re-open its borders to American beef imports.

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