

Wayne Allard

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SECRETARY OF STATE RICE AGREES TO DELIVER ALLARD MESSAGE ON ENDING BEEF IMPORT EMBARGO DURING VISIT TO JAPAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) said Thursday that U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has agreed to press the Japanese government to lift its embargo on beef imports from the United States during her visit to Japan, scheduled to begin Friday.

“At my urging, Secretary Rice will put this issue at the top of her economic agenda during these talks with the Japanese,” Senator Allard said.

“During discussions with the State Department, and in a letter to the Secretary, I made it clear how important this matter is to American ranchers and farmers,” Senator Allard said. “I have also asked her to impress on the Japanese that their embargo has the potential to result in retaliatory economic sanctions, which would be unfortunate for all parties involved.”

Last week, Senator Allard met with the Japanese Ambassador to the United States to discuss how to bring the Japanese beef embargo to a quick conclusion. Thirteen other senators and congressmen participated in that meeting as well.

In December of 2003, a single, foreign-born, cow tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in Washington-state. As a result of this finding, Japan immediately closed its markets to U.S. beef. After much negotiation, the U.S. and Japan have agreed in principal to the resumption of trade. Unfortunately, an independent body of the Japanese government, the Food Safety Commission, has yet to approve this decision, keeping the market of what used to be the largest importer of U.S. beef closed.

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