JAMAICA LIFTS BAN ON U.S. BEEF PRODUCTS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6, 2004 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that the Jamaican Ministry of Agriculture has lifted its ban on U.S. beef products.

“We are very pleased with this agreement with Jamaica because it marks an important step forward in getting U.S. beef markets opened,” Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman said. “We are continuing our market-opening efforts in other countries. Our goal continues to be the resumption of normal beef trade throughout the world, and we are working tirelessly on that effort.”

“This action demonstrates Jamaica’s commitment to trade in beef and beef products based on internationally accepted scientific standards for human and animal health,” Veneman said.

In response to a finding of BSE in December 2003, the United States has implemented several new regulatory measures to further strengthen the food safety system and assure consumers of wholesome meat products. These include immediately banning non-ambulatory animals for human consumption, prohibiting specified risk materials and strengthening meat-processing safeguards.

Prior to the ban, U.S. beef and beef products exports to Jamaica totaled $4.3 million in 2003.


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