

Issue:

For the past two years, the U.S. Government's policy has been to pursue beef market access agreements that were fully consistent with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). Political, technical and commercial conditions in many leading export markets preclude achieving fully OIE consistent agreements in the near term.

Background:

AFBF policy respects rules-based trading systems based soundly in science for all issues and commodities. In the case of beef, "sound science" refers to the controlled risk status for BSE granted the U.S. by the OIE.

Based on OIE designation, beef from all cuts of a carcass derived from a bovine of any age are deemed safe for human consumption. As such, AFBF's position has been to oppose "incremental" or "stair step" market access agreements that do not open foreign markets to all cuts from all ages of U.S. beef.

AFBF Policy:

Trade / Treaties

We support the use of sound science and OIE guidance in classifying countries as a minimal risk region for BSE. Farm Bureau reaffirms its support for using sound science as a basis for reopening our markets to ensure continued consumer confidence. However we are concerned about the process of reopening markets on our domestic beef industry. We urge USDA to use measures and protocol to open the market in order to ensure consumer confidence and enhance our beef industry. We encourage the AFBF Board of Directors to closely monitor the actions of the USDA and others to meet these goals.

Question:

1. Should Farm Bureau support incremental market access agreements?