



Canada Beef Export Federation

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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MEXICO BORDER OFFICIALLY OPENS TO CANADIAN BEEF

On October 1, 2003, Mexico officially opened its borders to beef imports from Canada with the publication of a Notification in the Official Gazette of Mexico's Ministry of Agriculture (SAGARPA). The Notification, signed last week by Mexico's Agriculture Secretary Usabiaga, lifts the BSE ban imposed May 20, 2003 and authorizes the import of specified beef products from Canada.

Approved for import are fresh, chilled and frozen boneless beef products, viscera (liver, kidney heart and tongue), processed beef products and bovine fats – all from animals under 30 months (UTM).

While Mexican regulations normally prohibit the importation of beef from any country that is known to have had BSE, Mexico's Animal Health Department has established sanitary requirements for Canadian imports, allowing Mexico to re-open its border to Canadian beef without having to change their regulations. A sanitary certificate developed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to meet these requirements has been approved by Mexican authorities.

"This is great news," says Ben Thorlakson, Chairman of the Canada Beef Export Federation. "The Federation extends its thanks and congratulations to all individuals involved in this market access success. We fully expect to see significant volumes of Canadian beef begin to move through the US to Mexico late this week or early next week."

Still banned from import are Canadian bone-in beef, beef from animals over 30 months of age (OTM) and live cattle.

“We’re optimistic that the remaining prohibited products will be approved in the near future,” says Ted Haney, President of CANADA BEEF. “With this access, Mexico is helping to create a more comprehensive template for reestablishing trade in Canadian beef.

“In 2002, Canada averaged 6,000 tonnes a month of beef exports to Mexico,” he says. “Given this access and the continued constraints in other Asian markets, exports from Canada to Mexico should be expected to surpass this level to perhaps 10,000 tonnes per month.

“We’re pleased and thankful for the continued support of Mexico’s Secretary of Agriculture and his senior technical officials,” says Haney.

The Canada Beef Export Federation is an independent non-profit industry association with a mandate to identify and develop markets to increase the sale of Canadian beef and veal products with the cooperation of all companies, organizations, and institutions which benefit from this success. Its national membership includes cattle producers, beef and veal exporters, key suppliers of goods and services to the industry, and provincial and federal government departments committed to export success.

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