



Canadian Cattlemen's Association

## News Release

### Canadian Cattlemen's Association Comments on Re-Opening of Comment Period

March 4, 2004

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) said today the organization is gratified to again have a time frame to look forward to a decision from the U.S. on re-opening the border to Canadian live cattle and other beef products. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced today the comment period for the proposed rule for importing live cattle and bone-in beef into the U.S. from regions that are minimal risk for BSE will re-open until April 7. Canada is a minimal risk region.

Once the comment period ends on April 7, the U.S. government will begin assessing all the comments received, ultimately leading to a decision on re-opening the border to Canadian live cattle and other products.

"It's good to have a time frame," says Neil Jahnke, President of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. "This doesn't give us the answer to the question when will the border re-open to live cattle, but it does mean the rule-making process is again moving forward. Today's announcement is a very important step forward for the Canadian beef industry."

Today's USDA announcement also requests comments on whether to allow beef from cattle over 30 months of age. It is the CCA's position that beef from cattle of all age groups should be eligible for export when all necessary food safety precautions have been taken. Currently boneless beef from cattle under 30 months of age is eligible for export to the U.S. The USDA also states the finding of the cow with BSE in Washington State does not alter its original risk assessment of Canadian cattle and beef products.

The rule making process was interrupted while the USDA carried out its investigation into the cow diagnosed with BSE in Washington State that was ultimately traced to a Canadian herd of origin.

**For further information:**

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*CCA is the National Voice for the Beef Cattle Industry, representing over 90,000 Cattle Producers*