



POWDER RIVER BASIN RESOURCE COUNCIL LAUDS ENZI LIVESTOCK BILL

(Newcastle)... The Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention Act of 2008 sponsored by Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Sen. Tim Johnson (D-SD) was introduced in the Senate last week. This legislative action is in response to USDA's recent proposal to allow various animal products from Argentina to be shipped to the United States.

The bill will prohibit the importation of ruminants and swine and fresh or frozen ruminant and pork products from any region of Argentina until the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) can certify to Congress that Argentina is free of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).

Donley Darnell, Chair of the PRBRC agriculture committee, commented upon the action, stating, "Our members have long supported any provision that would ban livestock imported from a country that is known to have a disease problem which would place our cattle herds at risk. Argentina is one of the countries which has a long history of Foot and Mouth Disease outbreaks and the US currently does not accept live cattle, fresh or frozen beef from them because of this problem."

Foot and Mouth disease is a highly contagious and sometimes deadly disease that infects animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, deer, elk and bison. According to USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the economic impacts of FMD in the U.S. could cost the economy billions of dollars in the first year alone and according to the American Veterinary Medical Association is the most economically devastating of all livestock diseases.

In January 2007, the USDA proposed a plan to import meat from a select region of Argentina despite the country's well documented FMD cases. However, fears of the disease being masked by Argentina's vaccination programs, and Argentina's lack of response and disease tracking have stalled any attempts by USDA to lift the import ban.

"This legislation protects against regionalization of Argentina's herd and protects the US domestic herd which has been FMD free since 1929."

"This bill will prohibit Argentina from shipping products as well as live animals that are known to carry the disease." The /Enzi/Johnson bill makes no changes to current trade policy with Argentina as the United States is currently importing dried, cured or cooked product from FMD-infected countries like Argentina.

"We thank Senators Enzi as a prime sponsor as well as Senator Barrasso for his co-sponsorship. We also appreciate Wyoming Congresswoman Barbara Cubin for sponsoring a mirror bill in the House. We hope that all the members of congress will see the importance of approving this bill."

Powder River Basin Resource Council is a grassroots agriculture and conservation group that organizes Wyomingites to protect our family ranches and farms, natural resources, and unique Wyoming way of life. For more information please visit www.Powderriverbasin.org.

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