



AVA LIFTS BAN ON BEEF IMPORTS FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (US)

The Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) has lifted the ban on beef imports from the United States of America (US). AVA is finalizing with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on the operational details of the health certification program to facilitate the resumption of imports as soon as possible. With the lifting of the ban, de-boned beef cuts from young cattle (less than 30 months old) from the US will be allowed for import into Singapore.

Ban of beef imports from BSE affected countries

2 Import of beef from the US was suspended on 24 Dec 2003, following the detection of a case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, in the State of Washington.

3 As little was known about BSE then, AVA's import requirements for countries affected by BSE allowed only countries which have been accredited by AVA and are free from BSE for at least 6 years to export beef to Singapore.

Review of import conditions for beef from BSE-affected countries

4 Since then, more has been learnt about the disease. In 2005, AVA reviewed its import conditions for beef from BSE-affected countries and developed new import requirements to allow restricted beef imports which are in line with the OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) guidelines for trade in beef from BSE-affected countries. These import requirements ensure that beef imports from BSE-affected countries are safe for consumption.

MEDIA RELEASE

5 AVA has conducted a full assessment of the risk of BSE from US beef imports and also carried out an on-site inspection in the US in November 2005. AVA is satisfied that the US has in place effective safeguards to ensure that de-boned beef cuts exported are safe for consumption.

Supply of beef

6 Singapore's beef supply in 2005 amounted to 20,392 tonnes (\$110.1m). Singapore currently imports beef from countries such as Australia and New Zealand. Prior to the ban in 2003, beef imports from US (1,009 tonnes) constituted about 5% of our beef supply

**Issued by Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority
Ministry of National Development
on 17 January 2006**

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