



DECISION TO LIFT BAN ON US BEEF IMPORT REMAINS UNCHANGED

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority's decision to lift the ban on US beef import is not affected by the recent re-imposition of a ban on US beef imports by Japan.

2 AVA had announced on 17 Jan 2006 that it was lifting the ban on US beef imports. Using a science based approach, AVA had assessed that the ban on de-boned beef cuts from the US could be lifted without compromising food safety.

3 AVA is currently working with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to finalize the operational details of the health certification programme to facilitate the resumption of imports. Importers will be allowed to bring in US beef consignments once these details are finalized. This could take a month.

4 Following the report on the recent breach of import requirements in a consignment of US beef exported to Japan, the US had provided assurance to AVA that USDA had acted swiftly and decisively to address the breach through a series of remedial measures to enhance the effectiveness of the beef export compliance programme. These measures by the US will provide additional assurances on the proper implementation of requirements for export of US beef to Singapore.

5 Nevertheless, every consignment of beef from US, like all other meat imports, will be subject to stringent inspection and laboratory testing upon arrival in Singapore. We would like to assure the public that beef available in the Singapore market is safe for consumption.

**Issued by Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority
Ministry of National Development
on 24 January 2006**

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