



For Immediate Release
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SENATORS WANT BEEF ON THE MENU FOR JAPANESE P.M.

*Baucus, Tester urge White House chef to serve Montana steaks,
encourage Japan to lift unfair ban on U.S. beef*

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Senator Jon Tester (D-Mont.) today urged White House chef Cristeta Comerford to serve Montana beef to visiting Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe this week, as a gesture of friendship and as an effort to end Japan’s unfair ban on U.S. beef imports. The President and First Lady will host Prime Minister Abe for dinner at the White House on Thursday.

“A knife and fork could be the best tools of diplomacy when it comes to Japan’s beef ban,” said Baucus. **“We all know, and Japan knows, that U.S. beef is perfectly safe. This week we should take our differences on beef from the negotiating table to the dinner table, and let the expert hands of the White House chef do the talking.”**

“There are lots of dinner choices in Washington, but nothing beats a big, red, juicy steak from back home,” Tester said. **“Prime Minister Abe is in for a real treat. So are millions of Japanese, as soon as this ban is lifted.”**

Japan banned U.S. beef in 2003, after a cow in Washington state tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE. Japan resumed shipments of U.S. beef from cattle 20 months of age or younger in July 2006, but international health standards certify the safety of all U.S. beef, bone-in and boneless, regardless of age. The text of the Senators’ letter follows here:

April 23, 2007

Ms. Cristeta Comerford
White House Executive Chef
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Ms. Comerford,

As you prepare the menu for the White House dinner for Japanese Prime Minister Abe and his delegation, we kindly ask that you offer the finest cuts of quality Montana beef in friendship and in good taste.

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As you well know, Montana beef is second to none, peerless in its quality and tastiness. Unfortunately, many of the world's consumers, including those in Japan, are deprived of quality American beef, due to unscientific and unjustified trade barriers. Dismantling these barriers is in the interests of both American ranchers and Japanese consumers.

History and human nature show that the palate is often a convincing advocate for change. In your hands, we believe that you can make a deliciously irresistible case that Montana beef belongs in the Japanese market and on Japanese dinner plates. With Montana beef on everyone's plates, we are certain that this historic dinner will be a diplomatic success, as well as a culinary one.

Sincerely,

Max Baucus

Jon Tester

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