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FSTS
Docket 03-0251F
Cotton Annex
300 12th & C street SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

to Food, Safety, and Inspection Service:

As a beef producer here in the Plains, I view the current mousing rule as confusion for the packing industry in determining the 30 month age for cattle. The way it stands now is that the current rule will be devaluing heiferettes that currently bring a premium over adult cows. The 30 month should be the legal age for deciding the 30 month cut off in the age of cattle. The simple reason is not all cattle age the same.

I suggest the Department of Agriculture keep the financial burdens of the U.S. Livestock Industry at a minimum. First, by taking steps to identify all Canadian cattle residing in the U.S. as BSE is a Canadian problem. It is not a U.S. problem. This current mousing rule should only apply for countries that import into the U.S. that do not have any safeguards and rules in place protecting us from diseases such as Bovine spongiform encephalopathy.

Canada's problems were also imported- from Great Britain: a country the United States bans all imports from

In closing I suggest the U.S. close its borders on all imported beef until the United States can ascertain all countries have safeguards in place for protection against BSE. The protection and integrity of the U.S. Beef Industry should be first, and foremost on the agenda at U.S.D.A.

Sincerely yours,

David Willman

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