

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 28, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

We write to express our concerns with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) February 20, 2020, decision to lift the U.S. ban on Brazilian raw beef imports.

In 2017, USDA FSIS refused entry to approximately 2 million pounds of beef from Brazil and subsequently announced the suspension of all imports of fresh beef from Brazil due to public health concerns, poor sanitary conditions, and animal health issues. Given that the United States halted Brazilian raw beef imports less than one year after Brazil was granted access in 2016, we have serious concerns about Brazil's ability to maintain adequate food safety standards over the long run.

We recognize that the January 2020 FSIS audit found that Brazil's Central Competent Authority had implemented corrective actions to address the deficiencies identified in the June 2019 FSIS audit. However, considering Brazil's multiple failed attempts to uphold equivalent food safety standards, we believe a complete verification process of certified Brazilian facilities may be warranted.

For this reason, we respectfully request answers to the following questions:

1. How will FSIS monitor Brazil's progress in fully implementing the corrective actions?
2. How does FSIS plan to respond if Brazil fails to implement all necessary corrective actions?
3. Given that FSIS audited only eight of the 28 facilities in Brazil certified for U.S. exports, does FSIS plan to audit additional facilities? If so, when?
4. When, if ever, does FSIS expect to have audited all 28 certified facilities?
5. On what basis will FSIS conduct routine audits of already certified facilities?

Thank you for your prompt attention to these concerns. Please respond in writing no later than March 10. If you need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

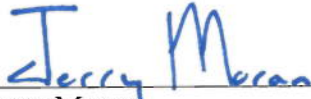
Sincerely,



John Thune
United States Senator



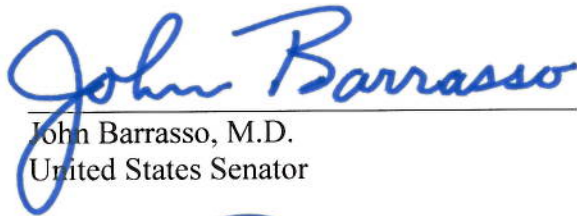
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United States Senator



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United States Senator



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United States Senator




M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



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United States Senator



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Kevin Cramer
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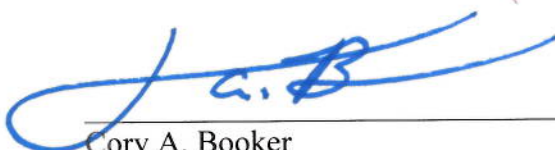
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