

To Ishihara Shintaro, Governor
Tokyo Metropolitan Government

June 15, 2007

We demand that 100% BSE inspection should be continued in 2008

Since the first discovery of BSE-infected cow on September 10, 2001, the Japanese government has allocated funds until 2007 to support blanket testing of all cattle in Japan as part of the BSE countermeasures. Such BSE screening of all domestic cattle has been conducted, and traceability, feed regulations and removal of specified risk material (SRM) have been put in place in order to eradicate BSE in Japan. While BSE prions have been found in younger cattle, such screening efforts ensure that no BSE prions enter the food chain. So far, Japanese consumers have been certain that meat from domestic cattle is safe.

In order to resume import of US beef, the Japanese government has decided that the cattle which are 20 months or younger do not legally require to be inspected in any way since August 2005. However, in Japan, local self-governance regulation in Yamagata, Miyazaki and Kyoto Prefectures are requiring local cattle producers to continue the testing program also in 2008. We want to request Tokyo Metropolitan Government to also consider this seriously, and support continued blanket testing of all cattle. We demand that the blanket testing system should be kept in place. In addition, Tokyo and other local governments in the country should demand that the national government should allocate funds for BSE inspections of all cattle in Japan.

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(A similar letter was sent to Japan's Minister for Health, Labour and Welfare on June 15, 2007)