

*Fighting for the U.S. Cattle Producer!*



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August 24, 2009

Doug O'Brien  
Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., SW, Suite 200-A  
Washington D.C. 20250

Sent Via Facsimile and E-mail

**Re: Request for Investigation of Potential Violation of USDA Import Requirements**

Dear Mr. O'Brien:

R-CALF USA members from the state of Washington have informed me of a potential violation of federal import requirements regarding the importation of cattle into the United States from Canada. It is my understanding that cattle were imported into the U.S. from Canada through the State of Washington in the spring of 2009 pursuant to a health certificate for ruminants described at 9 CFR § 93.405, which requires, *inter alia*, the disclosure of the purpose of the importation and the specific physical location of the destination where the ruminants are to be moved after importation.

I have verbally confirmed with Washington State Veterinarian Dr. Leonard Eldridge that approximately 405 head of feeder steers and heifers imported into the United States from Canada were permitted by the State of Washington to be located in a dry feedlot at the El Oro cattle feedlot located in Moses Lake, Washington. However, these cattle allegedly were instead diverted to rangeland near North Port, Washington, where they have commingled with domestic cattle in the Three Rivers Ranger District in the Colville National Forest.

It is my understanding that Dr. Eldridge is currently conducting an investigation of these 405 head of cattle as they purportedly had been diverted to rangeland without meeting the State of Washington's testing requirements pertaining to brucellosis and/or bovine tuberculosis. It is further my understanding that Dr. Eldridge also is conducting an investigation regarding the disposition of approximately 26,000 imported Canadian cattle that had entered the U.S. through the State of Washington since April 2009.

An issue here is that domestic cattle have now been commingled with Canadian cattle that were allegedly diverted from the dry feedlot for which they were permitted to rangeland for which they were not permitted, resulting in the exposure of domestic cattle to a potential risk of bovine tuberculosis and/or brucellosis.

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While Dr. Eldridge is taking steps to quarantine and test the diverted Canadian cattle in accordance with the laws and regulations of the State of Washington, R-CALF USA believes that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) needs to additionally and immediately investigate whether the above described official health certificate for ruminants used to authorize the importation of these cattle into the U.S. from Canada contained false or misleading information. If this is the case, then USDA should immediately investigate whether any of the other 26,000 additional Canadian imports likewise were accompanied with inaccurate health certificates for ruminants.

Time is of the essence regarding this request as the domestic cattle now grazing on the Three Rivers Ranger District in the Colville National Forest, where the domestic cattle have been exposed to the Canadian cattle, will soon be commingled with additional domestic cattle after they are removed from the forest on or about October 1, 2009.

If R-CALF USA can assist USDA in this investigation in any way, please contact me at 406-670-8157, or via e-mail at [billbullard@r-calfusa.com](mailto:billbullard@r-calfusa.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Bullard". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Bill Bullard  
CEO

Cc: Dr. Leonard Eldridge