

United States Senate

March 22, 2017

COMMITTEES
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION AND
FORESTRY
APPROPRIATIONS
ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES
HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Michael Young
Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Acting Deputy Secretary Young:

I write regarding the recent developments in Brazil where several meatpacking companies are being investigated for corruption and fraudulent inspections of meat intended for foreign markets. Maintaining a safe and secure food supply is essential to the mission of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). While I appreciate the initial steps USDA and the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) have taken to implement even more stringent inspections on all meat imports from Brazil, I request that you utilize all appropriate and legal means necessary to ensure that U.S. consumers are not at risk to any tainted imported meat from Brazil or other countries. The urgency of the situation demands prompt and ongoing administrative action, which would be the most timely and effective manner to remedy the issue.

According to reports, dozens of arrests have been made in Brazil related to claims of bribing meat inspectors or directing compromised inspectors to targeted plants to allow tainted or expired meats to be exported. In light of these disturbing allegations and until all the facts are known, I urge you to ban meat imports from any facility in Brazil that has been implicated in this scandal until onsite inspections at impacted facilities are conducted by FSIS and it is confirmed that equivalency standards are met.

With this in mind, I also request responses to the below questions:

1. How many of the meatpacking facilities implicated in this scandal maintain equivalency standards and are able to ship meat to the U.S.?
2. Has any meat from Brazil been imported into the U.S. from any of the implicated facilities? If so, when was the meat imported?
3. How is USDA engaging with Brazilian counterparts to ensure the quality and safety of the U.S. meat imports?

I stand ready to work with you to ensure that our nation's food supply remains safe and secure and request ongoing updates. Thank you for your consideration and a prompt response would be appreciated.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator