

# U.S. Breeding Cattle Win Access to Mexico

Persistent cattlemen helped win access to Mexico for breeding cattle from the U.S. in an important trade victory. Agriculture Secretary Edward Schafer announced March 27 that Mexico has agreed to allow importation of breeding cattle from the U.S. born after Jan. 1, 1999. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) has long fought for fair and free international trade for U.S. cattle producers.

"The opening of the Mexican border has been long overdue and it is definitely a great win-win for both U.S.

and Mexican cattlemen," said NCBA President Andy Groseta, an Arizona cattle producer. "Our seedstock producers can sell their superior genetics to Mexican cattlemen who are striving to improve the genetics of their cow herds. As we all know, many of the Mexican stocker and feed cattle come back to the U.S. So it is a win-win for all parties concerned."

Mexico denied access to U.S. breeding stock Dec. 23, 2003, when the U.S. announced its first-ever case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Since that time, Mexico has

only allowed importation of registered U.S. dairy heifers under the age of 24 months, despite in-depth international negotiations to include breeding stock.

"This is a big win for U.S. cattle producers and, in particular, those in the seedstock community," said Gregg Doud, chief economist for NCBA. "Mexico is currently working to expand its herds, so this decision comes at a critical time."

Traditionally, the U.S. has shipped approximately \$125 million annually in live cattle breeding stock to Mexico.

— *Release provided by NCBA*