

Slow recovery from U.S. beef boycotts

September 7 2006

A Kansas State University study shows it may take a few years for the United States to recover from Japan's and South Korea's boycotts of U.S. beef.

Researchers say the U.S. beef industry probably lost \$3.2 billion to \$4.7 billion in 2004 after Japan and South Korea banned imports following discovery of a U.S. mad cow case.

South Korea has since lifted its ban. Japan did so briefly in late 2005 before reinstating it when a small quantity of banned material was found in a shipment.

In June, Japan and U.S. officials reached agreement to resume U.S. beef exports.

"It looks right now like (the effects) will linger on," said Sean Fox, a Kansas State University agricultural economics associate professor who researched the situation for the university's Food Safety Consortium.

"Even if we hadn't had this latest episode with Japan, where they've reinstated the ban, we were probably looking at regaining one-third, maximum, of that market compared to what we had there in 2003," he said. "To get back to where we were in 2003, we're probably looking at two to four years."

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