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NEWS from
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1979

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DOLE, KASSEBAUM TO INTRODUCE 'MEAT IMPORT ACT OF 1979'

WASHINGTON-- Kansas Senators Bob Dole and Nancy Landon Kassebaum today announced that they plan to introduce the "Meat Import Act of 1979."

Dole, who was a sponsor of a Beef Import Act during the last session of Congress which passed overwelmingly but was subsequently vetoed by the President, calls the Meat Import Act of 1979 "a reaffirmation of what we in the Congress recognized last session. It recognizes that we need a piece of legislation which serves both the consumer and the producer in a rational and cost-effective manner."

Dole and fellow Kansas Republican Kassebaum are proposing a "countercyclical formula" for meat imports. The bill incorporates a formula which will permit more beef imports-- about 1.7 billion pounds more, to be exact-- to enter the U.S. over the next decade than if the current law is maintained.

"This bill will dampen the drastic price fluctuations that have had such a crippling impact on our farmers and consumers," said Senator Kassebaum. "The formula, in effect, will promote a balance between supply and demand, taking into account the role imports must play in supplying the domestic market."

The main points of the bill will include:

**Provide a countercyclical formula by which the volume of meat imports would be regulated.

**The formula would permit the entry of <u>more</u> beef imports over the next ten years than under current law and would, therefore, not be inflationary.

**The formula seeks to establish some equalibrium between supply and demand so that prices will not go through huge fluctuations thereby injuring producers and consumers alike.

**The bill would restrict the President's ability to permit increased imports, such action in June 1978, resulting in increased imports of 200 million pounds which resulted in depressed cattle prices which had only begun to increase after a long period of severe and widespread losses among livestock producers.

**The Dole Presidential authority formula would allow the President to suspend or increase import quotas only in a national emergency or when the ratio of cattle and beef prices for two consecutive calendar quarters is greater than or equal to 1.10 which would mean that the President could have exercised his authority in the years 1972 and 1973. No action could have been taken in 1978. The formula also restricts the length of time for such suspensions or increases to two calendar quarters. To go beyond that, certain criteria will have to be fulfilled.

**The President would be required to give 30-days notice before he took action to suspend or increase import quotas.

**The formula would be adjusted to react more consistently and rapidly to changes in the domestic cattle market.

**The bill would also provide a minimum level of imports of 1.2 billion pounds per year, thereby assuring access to the U.S. market for traditional foreign suppliers but in an amount based on past import levels.

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