

## Importation is good, but beef needs to be healthy

The secretary of agriculture, having won a federal appeal, is set to resume imports of Canadian beef stopped after discovery of a case of mad cow disease in that country.

Department of Agriculture scientists assured the courts that resuming imports is safe. It's not like the Canadian herds were infested with mad cows, after all. They found one there, and shipped one here.

The U.S. now has its own case. So far, no human in either country has been infected.

As the Canadian cases hurt exports from that country, the U.S. case has hurt chances for beef exports by stockmen here.

There will be winners and losers. Packing plants and feed lots need more import beef. Some ranchers are fighting imports, not because they're unsafe, but because keeping Canadian beef out may help keep prices up here.

It's a free-trade world, though, and we all benefit from that in the long run. Let the imports come. It's the right thing to do.

As that happens, though, we'll urge the Agriculture Department to get with the program and tighten up controls designed to prevent mad cow disease from spreading.

Border inspections are important, but there are disturbing reports that unsafe feeding practices and incomplete inspections threaten the beef supply chain in this country.

Beef parts, especially brain and nerve tissue, have been banned from cattle feed in this country, but some are still being fed to other animals. That ought to stop.

The only safe use for these parts is rendering at temperatures designed to kill any life form. Some scientists argue that the beef form of the disease could spread to other species of livestock the same as it apparently does to humans.

How is it safe, then, to feed any beef nerve tissue to any species?

There also have been reports of contamination of beef feed with these banned tissues. We don't need to take that risk. This is a dangerous disease, and if it gets out of control, economic damage will be huge.

Our understanding of the sublife-form called prions thought to cause this and other brain-wasting diseases is minimal. We simply don't know how to handle them.

The government has banned private efforts to inspect more cattle than federal rules require. The theory is that universal testing is too expensive, and if one packer does it, everyone will have to.

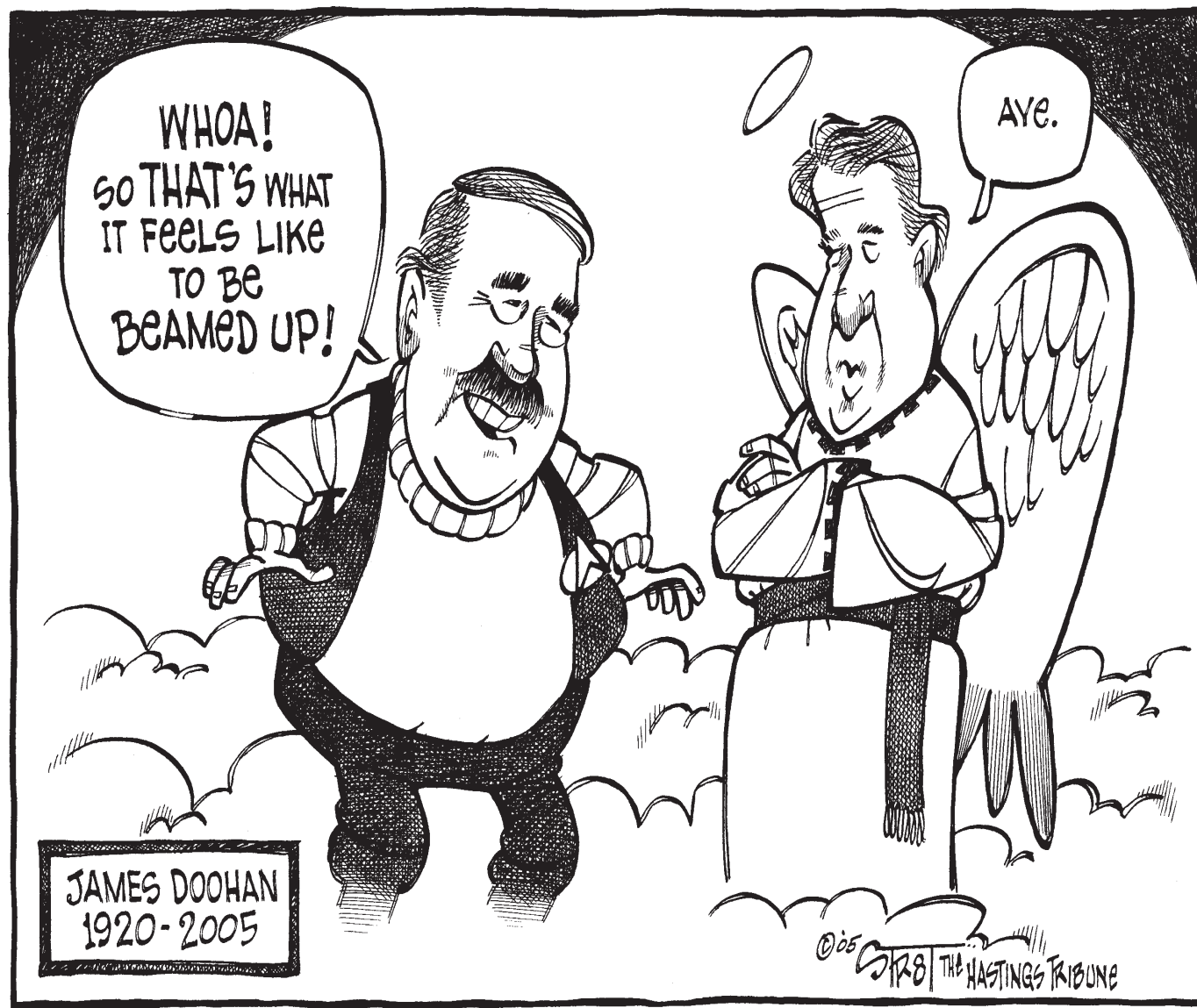
That could be true, but why interfere with a plan to reopen the lucrative Japanese market? Or provide a safe, healthy alternative to market beef?

The end result would benefit everyone.

The Agriculture Department shouldn't play games with public health and safety, or with the safety of the beef industry. The tightest control will produce the most benefit.

As Canadian beef begins to flow, we need to be sure that all beef is safe, theirs and ours.

— Steve Haynes.



## High heat gives a little taste of Hell

Heat, and all subjects relating to it, has been the topic of most conversations in this area for the past week.

Horribly hot. Ghastly hot. Beastly hot. None is quite adequate to describe the level of hotness we have experienced.

Most conversations seem to start one of two ways. "Hot enough for ya?" or "Are ya managin' to stay cool?"

Yes, it is hot enough for me. Thank you very much. The only ones it wouldn't be hot enough for is someone with a serious metabolic disorder or the Devil himself. I think last week gave us a little glimpse of Hell, and I don't want to go there.

Staying cool is another matter. It involves a series of air conditioning units, supplemented by an array of oscillating fans placed strategically around the house to optimize the maximum amount of air movement. In other words, I want to always be where the wind is blowing on me.

Why is it people are often married to someone with the exact opposite comfort zone?

Jim and I can be in the same room and

### Out Back Carolyn Plotts



he is chilled and reaching for a blanket while I am completely comfortable. I would prefer our bedroom be like a wind tunnel and he thinks there's too much air.

We're at odds in the winter, too. I would like to open a window for some fresh air, but he's freezing.

Is that what it means by "opposites attract?"

—ob—

Jim and his dad got to spend some quality time together last week. They took a road trip to Iowa with a dual purpose. One, to see one of Dad's nephews, Gib and his wife Liz, and two, to pick up a six-row cultivator.

Jim thought they had a wonderful time

and said Liz sure fed them well while they were there. He also said Gib's corn was 10 feet tall. Is that as high as an elephant's eye?

Jim did bring me a present, some starts from Liz's flower garden. He is still going on about how beautiful her flowers were. We'll see if Iowa flowers can survive in Kansas.

—ob—

Speaking of flowers, I went out to move the hose this morning and found some of the prettiest roses in bloom. Jim has brought me several rose bushes over the years and today I have the deepest red blossoms and the palest pink ones. Haven't seen anything of my lavender roses this summer. Guess they didn't make it through the winter.

—ob—

Did you hear about the letter a little girl wrote to her preacher? She asked, "How does God know the good people from the bad people? Do you tell him or does he read about it in the newspaper?"

## Congressman meets on trade policy

Congressman Jerry Moran has met with President Bush to discuss trade policy.

The president requested the meeting to discuss Mr. Moran's views on the Central American Free Trade Agreement, which will be voted on next week in the House. During the meeting, Mr. Moran told the president of his concerns with U.S. trade policy.

"While it is good to lower the tariffs that U.S. exporters of manufactured goods and agricultural commodities face selling to foreign countries, our trade policy has to be more than just entering into trade agreements," Mr. Moran said.

"Time and time again, even after tariff reductions are agreed to, many of our trading partners find excuses to limit sales of our products coming into their country. They cannot have it both ways — their

products coming into our country, and our sales restricted."

During the meeting with the president and U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman, the group discussed the need to allow the sale of food and agricultural commodities to Cuba and the continued ban on American beef by Japan and South Korea.

In July of 2001, the congressman offered an amendment that led to opening the market for U.S. farmers and ranchers to sell Cuba food, medicine and agricultural products. Since then, Cuba has purchased \$1.4 billion in agricultural commodities.

However, recently, the U.S. Department of Treasury has created additional restrictions on sales. Mr. Moran has been a leading critic of the administration's efforts to stop sales to Cuba.

Since December 2003, the U.S. has lost more than \$2 billion in sales of U.S. beef to Japan.

"I told the president that the most important trade issue to Kansas's First District is reopening U.S. beef sales to Japan and South Korea," Mr. Moran said. "The First Congressional District produces nearly five billion pounds of beef annually, making it the largest beef producing congressional district in the nation. The President must continue to exert every pressure possible on the Japanese and South Korean governments to reopen their borders to U.S. beef and meat products."

For more information, contact Congressman Moran at (202) 225-2715 or visit his web page at [www.house.gov/moranks01/](http://www.house.gov/moranks01/).

## WRITE:

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

### Professor needs to find people who know of Norton meteorite

To the Editor:

I am an English professor at Utah State University working on a contracted non-fiction book tentatively titled "The Fallen Sky: Seekers and Scientists in Pursuit of Shooting Stars".

For this project, I am devoting three chapters to the famous Kansas meteorite hunter Harvey Nininger. On Feb. 18, 1948, the great Norton meteorite struck, and the next day Nininger was in Norton beginning his field work. Later he was usurped by his rival, Professor Lincoln LaPaz of the University of New Mexico.

I have many articles from the Norton papers of the day and much archival material from the papers of both Nininger and LaPaz.

I would love to hear from area residents who witnessed the fireball and/or the activities of both Nininger and LaPaz. If there are families whose relatives witnessed the event and the subsequent searches—families that might have kept letters, diary accounts, photographs, etc.—I would love to hear from them as well. I am very interested in gathering impressions of Nininger and LaPaz.

If I can hear from those who might have material to share before August 10, I would be most grateful.

Sincerely,

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