

Canadian border cattle problem explored

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The problem with hundreds of cattle imported from Canada with incomplete documentation involves record-keeping issues, U.S. agriculture officials said.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture said the gaps in the cattle-tracking system, from missing ear tags to mismatched health records, don't endanger the safety of the food supply in the United States, the Chicago Tribune reported. Mad cow disease is a concern in Canada.

"While we're still in the midst of the review, we're finding that the bulk of the violations appear to be minor record-keeping problems at the state level," Andrea McNally of the agency's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service told the Tribune. "We don't have a conclusion."

Cattle ranchers were not satisfied with the agency's explanation, the newspaper said.

"I think this is passing the buck, ain't it?" said Lee Englehardt of the Cattle Producers of Washington. "What's the point of an animal ID system if we can't keep the records straight on a select number of cattle from Canada?"

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