

# Taiwan to step up checks on US beef after mad cow case

April 29 2012

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Taiwan plans to step up checks of US plants that process beef exported to the island, the government said Sunday, following the discovery of a new mad cow disease case in the United States.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) last week reported the country's fourth-ever case of [bovine spongiform encephalopathy](#) (BSE), but stressed the [outbreak](#) was contained and no contaminated meat had entered the food chain.

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack wrote a letter to his Taiwanese counterpart on Friday outlining the measures being adopted by the US authorities and pledged to keep Taiwan informed about the investigation of the case.

Taiwan said Sunday that officials planned to visit the US soon due to "concerns" following the new case.

"In order to clarify concerns and ensure safety of [beef](#), officials from the Council of Agriculture and the Department of Health will visit the United States as soon as possible," the council said in a statement.

Taiwan, like many other governments, banned US beef imports in December 2003 after [mad cow disease](#) was detected in an American herd but relaxed the rules in 2006 to allow imports of boneless beef.

Taiwan moved in October 2009 to allow US beef on the bone, cow

organs and minced beef, but the decision was overturned after a public outcry.

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Citation: Taiwan to step up checks on US beef after mad cow case (2012, April 29) retrieved 10 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-04-taiwan-beef-mad-cow-case.html>

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