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NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release



February 9, 2016
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BEEF FROM NEBRASKA HEADED TO ISRAEL
FOR FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE

LINCOLN – WR Reserve, a beef processing company in Hastings, Nebraska, will send the first significant shipment of beef from the United States to Israel since that country placed a ban on U.S. beef imports in 2003. Israel is one of the last countries to open its doors to U.S. beef imports following a finding of a confirmed case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the United States in December 2003.

“This is a major step toward increasing Nebraska beef exports to an important market,” Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach said. “We applaud WR Reserve for complying with a rigorous inspection process that included Israeli government regulator visits and final sign off by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service.”

NDA officials and U.S. Senator Deb Fischer (R-Neb.) worked collaboratively to provide outreach to USDA in an effort to achieve final approval for the company to begin exporting product.

“Nebraska beef producers are the best in the world,” said Senator Fischer. “This historic agreement with Israel is a testament to our producers’ tireless commitment to delivering safe, high-quality beef products to dinner tables around the globe. I was pleased to work with the USDA and the Israeli government to enable our state to supply the first American beef shipments to Israel in over a decade.”

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Fishel Ziegelheim, owner/manager of Minnesota-based Noah's Ark Processors, parent company of WR Reserve, said the final approval could not have been achieved without the assistance of the various parties involved. The company is excited to move forward and provide Israeli customers with high quality Nebraska beef.

"It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome the opportunity to export to the State of Israel," said Ziegelheim. "It is our intention to represent the United States and the State of Nebraska in the most professional manner, both in the highest level of Kosher and the highest level of quality."

According to USDA data, \$405 million of beef products were imported by Israel in 2014, with 95 percent of those imports coming from Latin America and the rest from Europe.

"We consider this a real success story that we will be able to build upon to continue to position beef from Nebraska as the world's choice of beef," said Ibach.

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