

07/11/2003 Entry: "Canada has No Plans to Close Border to U.S. Beef, Cattle"

OTTAWA (Reuters) - Canada has no plans to close its border to U.S. beef and cattle, a spokesman for Finance Minister John Manley said on Monday, after weekend reports said the minister had threatened to close the border.

"The minister never recommended closing of borders," said Mike Scandiffio, spokesman for Manley.

The United States, Japan, South Korea and about 20 countries have closed their borders to Canadian beef and cattle after the May 20 disclosure that one cow in Alberta had bovine spongiform encephalopathy or mad cow disease.

Saturday's edition of the National Post newspaper quoted Manley as stating: "If we can't (open the border) then we will have to go unilaterally and set standards that are different from the U.S. ... And that will mean, probably, we will have to exclude product from some of those other countries."