

DELEGATION SENDS LETTER TO U.S. TRADE REPRESENTATIVE CONCERNING RUSSIA'S BAN ON CHICKEN IMPORTS -- September 23, 2008

Washington,
D.C. -- Delaware's
congressional delegation -- Sens. Joe Biden and Tom Carper (both D-Del.) and
Rep. Mike Castle (R-Del.) -- sent the following letter to Ambassador Susan
Schwab United States Trade Representative regarding the decision from Russia,
as of September 1, to ban chicken imports from 19 plants in the United
States. Among this list are two Delaware plants: Mountaire Farms in
Millsboro and Selbyville. The delegation has asked for a review of this
decision, especially since Mountaire's plants have been inspected and given a
perfect "A" score.

Below is the text of the
letter.

September 16, 2008

Ambassador Susan C.
Schwab

U.S. Trade Representative

600 17th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Schwab:

We are writing to express our grave concern with Russia's September 1 decision to ban poultry imports from Mountaire Farms, which has two plants in the state of Delaware. We request that you review this decision, and urge continued support for export of poultry from our state.

Russia has issued statements recognizing that they will no longer import poultry from various U.S. producers, claiming health and disease concerns. However, poultry producers and integrators in our state have been committed to maintaining the highest standards of health. We were extremely surprised to see Delaware's Mountaire Farms as a delisted producer, since Russian inspectors recertified Mountaire with a perfect "A" score showing absolutely no deficiencies in their plants as of July 30, 2008. This information leads us to believe that Russia's decision to limit poultry imports is not one based on safety concerns, but on political interest alone.

Poultry trade practices should not be used as a political pawn and we request a full review of the basis and implications of this decision by Russian authorities.

Sincerely,

Joseph R. Biden,
Jr.

Thomas R.
Carper

Michael N. Castle

United States
Senator
United States
Senator

U.S. Representative

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