

Bush, Lee agree to enforce U.S. beef rule

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TOYAKO, Japan, -- South Korean President Lee Myung-bak and U.S. President George Bush agreed Wednesday to stringently enforce safeguards on the importation of U.S. beef.

Lee's decision to allow U.S. beef imports to resume has triggered months of street protests and demonstrations in Seoul, where demonstrators say they fear the spread of mad cow disease. In a compromise with opponents, Lee agreed to only allow beef from cattle under 30 months old.

The two leaders, meeting at a sideline to the Group of Eight summit in Japan, vowed "faithful implementation" on the 30-month rule, Yonhap, the South Korean news agency, reported.

Lee and Bush also agreed to continue to work to obtain a long-planned South Korean-U.S. free trade agreement through their respective legislatures by the end of this year, Yonhap said.

They reportedly also agreed on the goal of forcing North Korea to completely abandon its nuclear weapons program.