



BSE PRODUCER UPDATE

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Diagnosed in North America

On December 23, 2003 the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) diagnosed a case of BSE in a dairy cow from a herd in Washington State. The cow was born on April 9, 1997 in a herd in Alberta, Canada and was one of 81 animals from that herd imported into the U.S.

On May 20, 2003 the Canadian Minister of Agriculture confirmed a case of BSE in a 6-year-old beef cow from a herd in Alberta, Canada. Both of these cases were detected in the routine, targeted BSE surveillance program.

In 1993 a case of BSE was also diagnosed in Alberta, Canada in a beef bull imported from the United Kingdom (UK) in 1987. This animal had signs consistent with BSE in the importing herd. The animal and the herd it came from were destroyed, as were all offspring and all remaining animals imported from the UK.

Enhanced BSE Surveillance Plan in U.S.

The USDA has initiated an enhanced targeted BSE surveillance plan following the diagnosis of BSE in Washington State. The aim of the plan is to define whether BSE is present in the National Herd and, if so, at what level. Over the next 12-18 months, samples will be collected from as many "high-risk" cattle over 30 months of age as possible that:

- ↓# Cannot rise or cannot walk
- ↓# Show neurological signs
- ↓# Are condemned, euthanized or died following signs that may be associated with BSE
- ↓# Die from unknown causes.

A USDA cost recovery system is planned to aid the cattle industry during this surveillance program. These costs include the transportation of carcasses, storage of products or carcasses, and the disposal of products.

A random sample of apparently healthy cattle over thirty months of age will also be taken at slaughter facilities.

Overview of California's BSE Surveillance Plan

Regulatory personnel plan to collect brain samples at rendering facilities and other locations throughout California. Individual animal and premises of origin information will be collected with all samples. Samples will be delivered to the California Animal Health & Food Safety Laboratory in Davis for the rapid BSE screening test.

Carcasses or rendered products will be held until there is a negative laboratory result, and then they will be released.

Positive screening test samples will be sent to the National Veterinary Systems Laboratory in Iowa for confirmatory testing. A small percentage of samples may be false positives because of the sensitivity of the screening test. The carcasses or rendered products will be held secure if a sample is screen test positive. The confirmatory test, an immuno-histochemistry test, will determine if the sample is truly BSE positive or negative.

Consequences of a BSE Diagnosis in California

Additional cases of BSE may be diagnosed during this surveillance. If the National Laboratory confirms BSE, the carcass and rendered products will be destroyed. The positive animal will be traced to its premises of origin and the herd will be held until a full epidemiological investigation has been completed. Additional herds may be held if they are associated with the case. The movement of milk will not be impacted if BSE is diagnosed.

Because BSE does not spread from animal to animal, only cattle directly associated with the case will be destroyed, not the entire herd. Cattle that consumed the same contaminated feed as the case will be traced and destroyed. Any offspring of the case will also be traced and destroyed. Producers' identification and movement records will be used to clear all but these associated animals. Other cattle may be taken if there is insufficient identification or records to determine their identity.

Cattle Producers' Role in the Surveillance Plan

Testing as many "high-risk" cattle over 30 months of age as possible will assist the U.S. in resuming trade in beef and beef products. Producers can assist in this effort by:

- ↓# Ensuring all cattle, including dead animals, are identified before leaving the premises
- ↓# Keeping accurate animal identification and movement records
- ↓# Keeping accurate feed records
- ↓# Reporting cattle with neurological signs to your veterinarian
- ↓# Disposing of carcasses appropriately, such as with a licensed renderer.

CDFA Animal Health Branch Offices	
Sacramento (HQ)	916-654-1447
Modesto	209-491-9350
Ontario	909-947-4462
Redding	530-225-2140
Tulare	559-685-3500
USDA/APHIS/VS 916-854-3900 or 877-741-3690	

For more information, visit Web sites at: <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/> or <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs>