

# BSE SITUATION IN EUROPE

## HEATS UP

By Tina Caparella

In response to increasing reports of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in France and the first ever reported findings of BSE in native-born cattle in Spain and Germany, the European Union (EU) has put in place a six-month ban on feeding meat and bone meal (MBM) to all farm animals used in the production of food. The ban began January 1, 2001, and will remain in place with the possibility of an extension after the initial six month period. Previously, the EU banned mammalian meat and bone MEAL from being fed to ruminants in 1996.

“The Commission thinks this gives a period of time where we can look at the controls in place,” EU spokeswoman Beate Gminder is quoted in a Reuters news article. “It [the ban] is not based on scientific grounds, it is

purely a control issue.” Fish meal was excluded from the new embargo, but is banned from feeding to ruminants – cattle, sheep, and goats. The EU ban does not include tallow, although both France and Germany banned tallow from animal feeds in November and December, respectfully.

As reported by Reuter, EU Farm Commissioner Franz Fischler believes the three million tons of meat and bone meal produced every year in the EU might have to be

incinerated and unless another non-food use could be found, the ban could cost billions of euros. The EU ban also prohibits the placing on the market, trade, importation, and exportation of processed animal proteins.

France has reported more than 100 cases of BSE since January 2000, more than triple the previous year’s cases, but pale in comparison to the 180,000 cases of BSE discovered in Britain. As of the first week of January 2001,

**Table 1. European Union (EU) Exports of Meat and Bone Meal (MBM) (in metric tons)**

Country	1997	1998	1999	% of '99	1-6/99	1-6/00
Poland	272,900	300,878	244,020	43%	120,053	145,118
Indonesia	32,485	4,391	38,621	7%	4,868	47,112
Egypt	72,179	95,792	38,304	7%	37,404	5,197
Japan	163	4,608	30,166	5%	7,054	22,600
Thailand	34,936	10,178	29,053	5%	11,483	10,128
Russia	11,087	11,671	27,134	5%	14,298	12,359
Jordan	322	9,009	21,293	4%	7,657	17,240
Czech Republic	19,706	29,103	19,670	4%	8,587	17,619
Lithuania	3,112	9,237	18,351	3%	7,557	5,559
India	13,227	3,799	15,907	3%	6,662	8,798
All Others	80,245	62,877	78,722	14%	38,068	47,583
World	540,362	541,543	561,241	100%	263,691	339,313

Source: Eurostat HTS 2301.10

**Table 2. U.S. Exports of MBM to EU’s Major Export Markets for MBM (in metric tons)**

Country	1997	1998	1999	% of '99	1-6/99	1-6/00
Poland	0	0	0	0%	0	0
Indonesia	74,894	22,017	80,897	21%	41,571	38,422
Egypt	521	3,101	15,325	4%	1,194	21,969
Japan	10,831	11,467	4,761	1%	2,075	1,993
Thailand	24,194	17,805	22,042	6%	9,981	13,210
Russia	0	0	41	0%	0	115
Jordan	0	2,519	1,647	0%	743	482
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0%	0	0
Lithuania	0	0	0	0%	0	0
India	0	57	94	0%	0	841
All Others	179,746	255,656	256,686	67%	105,743	148,339
World	290,186	312,622	381,493	100%	161,307	225,371

Source: Eurostat HTS 2301.10

Note: Information in both tables is drawn from a presentation prepared by the Dairy, Livestock and Poultry Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Foreign Agriculture Service.

Germany, which had maintained that its cattle were BSE-free, had reported nine cases of BSE.

In addition to the feeding ban, the EU Commission is demanding more rigorous BSE testing, which also began January 1, 2001. The increase in the French cases may be partly attributable to the new testing since France introduced it prior to the required date. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has said it's possible other European member states will show similar increases in reported BSE cases once they begin the new testing program this year.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) was quick to follow the EU by banning imports of European meat and bone meal. No cases of BSE have been confirmed in the United States throughout 10 years of active surveillance.

"As of December 7, 2000, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has prohibited all imports of rendered animal protein products, regardless of species, from Europe," reads a statement from APHIS Administrator Craig Reed. "This decision followed the recent determination by the European Union that feed of non-ruminant origin was potentially cross-contaminated with the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) agent. The restriction applies to products originating, rendered, processed, or otherwise associated with European products. USDA is taking this emergency action to prevent potentially cross-contaminated products [from] entering the United States. The same type of rendered product from ruminant origin has been prohibited from BSE infected countries since 1989 and the entirety of Europe since 1997.

"USDA based all decisions regarding imports on sound science and extensive research. Although no case of BSE has ever been diagnosed in this country, we continue to take aggressive measures to protect the United States from BSE introduction and to ensure the security of U.S. export markets. These measures include active surveillance, testing, prevention, education, and emergency

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## Feeding Ban Enforcement Continues

In the wake of concerns over the increased incidence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in Europe, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Veterinary Medicine released in early January an update on the agency's efforts to enforce an FDA rule that prohibits the feeding of mammalian protein to ruminant animals in the United States. The rule went into effect August 4, 1997.

FDA developed an enforcement plan with the goal of 100 percent compliance with this rule. For the first two years in effect, the enforcement plan included education as well as inspections with FDA taking compliance actions for egregious actions or repeated non-compliance. As part of the plan, all FDA district offices were assigned in 1998 to conduct inspections of 100 percent of all renderers and feed mills and some ruminant feeders to determine compliance. Following is data from the inspections conducted thus far.

To date, there have been a total of 9,947 inspections, with around 80 percent conducted by state officials and the remainder by FDA. Various segments of the feed industry had different levels of compliance.

For renderers, the total number of inspections thus far is 239. Firms handling prohibited material numbered 180. Eighty-four percent of companies inspected had labeled their products with the required caution statement while 72 percent had a system in place to prevent commingling. Almost all renderers (96-98 percent) were following recordkeeping regulations.

Out of 1,240 FDA licensed feed mills, 846 have been inspected. Of those inspected, 347 were handling prohibited material with 80 percent properly labeling their products with the required caution statement. Ninety-one percent had a system to prevent commingling and 98 percent had followed recordkeeping regulations. For non-FDA licensed feed mills, 4,344 have been inspected. Of those, 1,593 were handling prohibited material with 59 percent following required caution statement labeling requirements. Seventy-four percent of non-licensed feed mills had a system to prevent commingling and 91 percent had followed recordkeeping regulations.

FDA noted that the agency is continuing its enforcement efforts to achieve the goals of 100 percent inspection and 100 percent compliance. FDA field offices will re-inspect 700 firms that were not in full compliance but have committed to implementing the regulation. In addition, FDA is seeking help from state feed control officials to identify non-FDA licensed feed mills and to conduct additional inspections in all categories. FDA anticipates higher levels of compliance after completion of follow-up inspections.

## Industry Responds to FDA's Report

The National Renderers Association (NRA) released a statement strongly supporting FDA's enforcement goal of 100 percent compliance with the rules and regulations prohibiting specified animal proteins in ruminant feed and commended the agency's inspection of rendering facilities. The association also agreed with the agency's strategy of compliance by recording any discrepancy as non-compliant.

NRA stated that the 97 percent compliance rate among renderers in meeting the documentation requirements is a clear affirmation and validation of the industry's efforts to follow the rule, adding that the policy of the industry is to correct noted deficiencies immediately.

"NRA, in its capacity as the rendering industry trade association, represents the collective voice and commitment of its members, most of whom are producers of animal proteins," the statement read. "The membership is conscious of the clear need for regulatory compliance of the FDA regulation and will continue to cooperate and work actively with FDA to accomplish the objective of keeping North America free from BSE."

No cases of BSE have been reported in the United States. ❖

preparation. Since 1989, the United States has banned the import of live ruminants [cattle, sheep, goats] and most ruminant products from countries where BSE has been reported. In 1998, USDA entered into a cooperative agreement with Harvard University's School of Public Health to analyze and evaluate the department's efforts to prevent BSE. A report is expected to be issued early next year [2001]."

APHIS's action will affect meat and bone meal, blood meal, tankage, offal, or any product containing such that originates directly from Europe or was rendered/processed in European plants processing animal materials, regardless of species of origin. According to the agency, imports of these products is minimal. Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries has also put in place a ban on imports of EU beef, processed beef, foodstuffs, and sperm beginning in January 2001, and Turkey followed suit with a ban on all imports of EU meat, cattle, and feed containing animal products, including pet food. Turkish Agriculture Minister Husnu Gokalp said in a French newspaper that the country has not detected any BSE infections. In December, Japan banned the use of animal feed produced from EU meat and bone meal and also put in place a ban on the use of animals from 28 countries in the production of medicines and cosmetics. Under this new rule, Japanese makers of medical products, supplies, and cosmetics are banned from using carcasses of ruminants, implicating tallow, from "mainly European nations," according to Daisaku Sato of Japan's Ministry of Health and Welfare.

At the beginning of the year, other countries, such as China, Poland, Jordan, and the Czech Republic, were instituting complete or partial bans on European meat and bone meal. It was expected more would follow suit.

#### Opportunity for U.S. Renderers?

With the feeding ban in place and the restriction on exports and imports of EU meat and bone meal, U.S.

## Mark Your Calendar

✓ The U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Ag Outlook Forum** is slated for February 22-23, 2001, in Arlington, VA. Topics to be addressed include discussion of the next farm bill, a keynote address by the secretary of agriculture, agriculture's role in World Trade Organization negotiations, and other agriculture issues. Registration is required by calling (202) 314-3451 or on the Internet at [www.usda.gov/oc/waob/agforum.htm](http://www.usda.gov/oc/waob/agforum.htm).

✓ **Petfood Forum 2001**, sponsored by *Petfood Industry* magazine, will be held March 26-28, 2001, at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Chicago, IL. Presentations will cover pet food production, nutrition, quality assurance, regulations, and marketing topics. Over 150 exhibits will cover the worldwide pet food industry. For more information or to register, call Marcia Riddle at (815) 734-4171, or e-mail [riddle@wattmm.com](mailto:riddle@wattmm.com).

✓ The **Animal Protein Producers Industry** will hold their spring meeting and Institute for Continuing Education Program April 18-19, 2001, in Raleigh, NC. The interactive educational program is comprehensive and stresses all facets of biosecurity. For information, call Dara John at (660) 277-3469.

✓ The **Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF)** has scheduled their spring meeting for April 24-25, 2001, at the Drake Hotel, Chicago, IL. For registration information, call FPRF at (309) 829-7744.

✓ The **National Renderers Association's (NRA)** spring meeting will be held April 25-27, 2001, at the Drake Hotel, Chicago, IL. Contact NRA at (703) 683-0155, or e-mail [renderers@nationalrenderers.com](mailto:renderers@nationalrenderers.com), for additional information.

✓ The American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) will hold **Expo '01 and The Feed Industry Show** May 7-9, 2001, in Indianapolis, IN. The forum will feature a variety of meetings and seminars covering the latest industry developments, feed production, information technology, nutrition, and international. Contact the AFIA at (703) 524-0810, or e-mail [pbratager@afia.org](mailto:pbratager@afia.org).

✓ The **China Animal Husbandry and Feed Industry Trade Fair 2001** will be held in the Dalian Xinghai Convention and Exhibition Center in Dalian, Liaoning province May 16-18, 2001. For information, log onto [www.eng.farmchina.com/feed/feedshow/default\\_new.htm](http://www.eng.farmchina.com/feed/feedshow/default_new.htm) or call 8610-65814212, ext. 25. ❖

renderers could see a demand for their products from countries that depend on European products. According to Jim Rudbeck, vice president of the National Renderers Association's International Programs, as of early this year interest in U.S. rendered products was already being shown by a number of countries.

The EU is the world's largest exporter of meat and bone meal. Major markets for Europe are listed in Table 1 and exports of U.S. products to those same regions are shown in Table 2. Of course, this possible increase in exports will be contingent upon U.S. supply availability, prices, and

whether those potential export markets are aware of the quality of U.S. meat and bone meal.

According to a recent report by the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology, a nonprofit organization of scientific societies, the risk of BSE in the United States is "extremely low" because of bans on imported cattle and using meat and bone meal from mammals in cattle feed, which was implemented in 1997. A surveillance program in place has tested approximately 12,000 U.S. cattle for BSE over the past 10 years, including about 2,300 in the past year. None has tested positive. ❖