



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Washington, D.C.
20250

December 24, 2003

TO: District Managers and Inspectors-In-Charge

FROM:

Karen Stuck *Mary Stenley*
Assistant Administrator
Office of International Affairs

SUBJECT: Export Notice 2003-8 -- BSE Investigation and Restrictions on U.S. Exports

Secretary Veneman announced December 23, 2003, that USDA has diagnosed a presumptive positive case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in an adult Holstein cow in the State of Washington. As a result, USDA initiated a comprehensive epidemiological investigation with FDA, state and local public health authorities, and industry to pinpoint the source of the disease. APHIS has quarantined the farm the cow came from, and FSIS is working to determine the post-slaughter disposition of the products from the animal.

The immediate known effect on U.S. exports of ruminants and ruminant products is as follows:

1. Export certificates for any country requiring a statement certifying that all ruminants and ruminant products are free of BSE cannot be signed until further notice.
2. Exporters are advised to check with the national authorities of countries that have not previously required a BSE-free certification to ascertain any changes in their import requirements prior to shipping ruminants or ruminant products to those countries. Information on new or changed import requirements should be reported to APHIS and FSIS as soon as possible. This information must be verified by FSIS with foreign governments before shipments will be certified.
3. As of December 24, 2003, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, and Zambia have notified USDA that they are suspending the importation of all U.S. ruminants and ruminant products until further notice. Japan, Korea, and Singapore have notified USDA that all shipments in transit will be refused entry upon arrival. Taiwan will refuse shipments with an on-board date of December 24, 2003, or after. Exporters are advised that other countries may initiate similar restrictions in the near future.

OIA is obtaining updated information on a regular basis and will provide further guidance as it becomes available.