



BSE PREVENTION Q & A FOR DAIRY PRODUCERS

California dairy producers play a critical role in protecting the state's dairy herd from Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or Mad Cow Disease. By following federal and state regulations, producers ensure the safety of the meat supply, maintain the consumer confidence in dairy products and reduce the likelihood of experiencing herd depopulation in the event of a BSE outbreak.

The primary way cows become infected with BSE is through feed, the direct result of feeding cow-derived products back to cows. For this reason in 1997 the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) implemented a "ruminant feed ban" that prohibits protein derived from most mammals from being added to ruminant feed.

The feeding ban (and its associated record-keeping) may seem burdensome but it's actually the most important "fire wall" preventing the spread of BSE. The feed ban has effectively stopped BSE from spreading within the US after introduction from other countries such as Canada.

What can dairy producers can do to prevent BSE?

- Confirm with your nutritionist and feed suppliers that the dairy's rations are free of banned feeds (see list below).
- Check feed labels for the caution statement "*Do Not Feed to Cattle or Other Ruminants.*" Feed labeled with this caution statement may contain prohibited materials.
- Do not feed salvaged pet food, chicken feed or pig feed to cattle because it could contain prohibited materials such as meat and bone meal.
- Maintain records (invoices and feed labels) of all feed containing "allowed" animal proteins for a minimum of one year.
- Maintain herd records and animal identification sufficient to allow you to track when animals entered and left your herd.
- Report cattle with neurological signs to your veterinarian. These signs include stumbling, inability to rise and behavior change.
- Using licensed renderer for appropriate disposal of carcasses.

Which feed commodities are allowed and which are not?

Unless a commodity is specifically exempt (see exemptions below), it is illegal to feed a tissue that comes from any mammal to any ruminant. Below is a partial list of prohibited and allowed commodities. A complete list is available at FDA's guidance document for "small entities" feeders web page (see at bottom).

Examples of PROHIBITED feed commodities

- Meat meal
- Cooked or steamed bone meal
- Meat or bone tackage
- Un-inspected or uncooked human food meat products

Examples of ALLOWED ("exempted") commodities

- Milk Products (milk replacer)
- Blood Products (blood meal)
- Pure pork or equine products
- Poultry products (feather meal)
- Fish products (fish meal)
- Animal fat, tallow and grease

Do I need to keep feed records?

If a producer uses any of the animal protein sources on the "allowed" list above, then they must maintain records (invoices and feed labels) of those deliveries for at least one year. Only producers using solely vegetable feed commodities (hay, grain, etc.) have no record-keeping requirements.

Where can I get other questions answered?

More information is available at the websites listed below. The first of these is a particularly useful video on BSE produced in California. Producers with questions about their obligations under the feed ban are encouraged to contact their veterinarian, nutritionist, University of California Cooperative Extension advisor or the California commercial feed inspection program at 916-445-0444.

Useful Internet Resources for BSE

<http://dairybeef.ucdavis.edu/home.htm>

This site contains a short video on BSE prevention collaboratively produced by the CDQAP, the School of Veterinary Medicine and CDFA.

http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/BSE_info.html

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) home page for BSE information including brochures, posters and links to other BSE sites

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/fflders/safe.html>

Information on California's Safe Animal Feed Education (SAFE) Program

<http://www.fda.gov/cvm/Guidance/guidance69.pdf>

An FDA guidance document for producers with on-farm mixing

<http://www.fda.gov/cvm/guidance/guidance70.pdf>

An FDA guidance document for producers without on-farm mixing

<http://www.fda.gov/cvm/guida76.htm>

A FDA Question & Answer document on ruminant feeding

<http://www.meatami.com/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/1237>

American Meat Institute chart on strategies used in US to prevent BSE