

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS**

**60th Meeting of ACAF on 16 January 2013**

**Information Paper:**

**TSE UPDATE**

**TSE Team**

**DEFRA**

**January 2013**

## ACAF TSE UPDATE

### 1. European Commission (EC) proposal to permit the feeding of pig and poultry Processed Animal Protein (PAP) to farmed fish

#### **Key Messages**

- The EC presented a proposal to permit pig and poultry PAP to be fed to farmed fish at the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCOFAH) on 18 July, where it received a qualified majority.
- The proposal recently completed the EC's examination procedure. No opposition has been notified to the Presidency or the General Secretariat of the Council. Consequently, the Council's decision not to oppose the proposal has been taken upon the expiry of the three month deadline on 26 December 2012. The measure is expected to come into force in June 2013.
- Government will be consulting on consequential changes to domestic TSE legislation and implementation of the new arrangements. This will include working with processing plants which wish to process material to make PAP for aquaculture feed in the interim to make sure they have satisfactory arrangements in place to comply with both the revised TSE legislation and existing Animal By-products (ABP) legislation.
- Strict controls will remain in place to keep cattle, sheep and goat Meat and bone meal (MBM) out of all livestock feed.

#### **Key Conditions**

- It calls for the existing prohibitions on intra-species recycling to remain in place, that production channels of PAP derived from different species to be completely separated, that the separation of such production channels be controlled by the competent authorities in the Member States and audited by the EC.
- It would require implementation of the new validated diagnostic DNA-based testing regime, which can detect very low levels of ruminant material that may be present in feed.

#### **Background**

- A total ban on PAP in farmed livestock feed was introduced in 2001 to reinforce earlier bans amid the BSE crisis. This was to prevent cattle, sheep and goats from eating their own meat and bone meal via contaminated feed, the way BSE spreads. However, BSE has declined dramatically, with only 3 cases in the UK in 2012, so the European Union is looking at ways to reduce unnecessary burdens on the industry. Pig and poultry PAP are valuable protein sources and may be cheaper and more sustainable than current protein sources.
- As a first step, on the 18th July Member States voted to accept a specific proposal by the EC - to allow pig and poultry PAP to be incorporated into farmed fish feed. This measure is expected to come into force in June 2013.

- The EC's original draft proposal for discussion with Member States covered the feeding of all PAP derived from non-ruminants, to non-ruminants of a different species subject to the availability of validated tests to determine the species of origin of PAP and correct channelling of PAP from different species. However, there was a delay in the development of a validated diagnostic test method able to detect the presence of porcine or poultry material in feed. Therefore, it would not be possible to control the correct implementation of the prohibition on intra-species recycling for the use of PAP of porcine origin in poultry feed and the use of poultry PAPs in pig feed. As a result, the EC limited the scope of the proposal to allow pig and poultry PAP to be incorporated into farmed fish feed only. This would require implementation of the new validated diagnostic DNA-based testing regime which is able to detect very low level of ruminant material that may be present in feed.
- The EC's longer term objective is to continue working with the European Union Reference Laboratory for Animal Proteins in Feed regarding the development of a validated diagnostic method which is able to detect the presence of porcine or poultry material in feed. Although the levels of BSE have declined significantly, there are no plans to review existing controls which keep cattle, sheep and goat MBM out of all livestock feed.

## 2. European Commission (EC) proposal to stop BSE testing of healthy slaughtered cattle in the UK and 24 other Member States.

### **Key Messages**

- In line with European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recommendations, the EU is proposing to allow the UK and most other Member States the option of not testing healthy slaughtered cattle.
- The proposal was presented to SCOFCAH on 12 December, where it received a qualified majority.
- UK Chief Medical Officers and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) support the proposal.
- Tissues/organs found to contain BSE infectivity (called Specified Risk Material – SRM) will continue to be removed from the food chain and destroyed, regardless of the declining epidemic. This is the key *food safety / public health* control measure for BSE.
- The proposal is expected to be adopted in March 2013, following scrutiny by the European Parliament.

### **Background**

- Following recommendations in the [TSE Roadmap 2](#) and an opinion from EFSA on risks to changes to the BSE testing programme, on 17 June 2011 EU Member States agreed an amendment to EC Decision [2009/719/EC](#) which gave the UK and 24 other Member States (excluding Romania and Bulgaria) the options of:

(i) increasing the age threshold above which healthy slaughtered cattle for human consumption require testing for BSE from 4 to 6 years from 1 July 2011; and

(ii) testing a sample of such cattle from 1 January 2013.

- These 25 Member States have demonstrated a declining or low prevalence of BSE and that they have implemented the EU BSE surveillance programme and the EU feed ban for at least six years, and they have applied to revise their BSE testing programmes.
- The EC mandated EFSA to provide technical advice on the size of the sample of healthy slaughtered cattle aged over 6 years to be tested after 1 January 2013. The EFSA [Opinion](#), published on 15 October 2012, advised that in the EU 25 the surveillance system based on the testing of at risk cattle only (fallen stock, cattle found to be sick at ante mortem and emergency slaughter cattle) would easily meet the international standard regarding the sensitivity of BSE surveillance systems.
- The EC proposal, published on 15 November 2012, states that in view of EFSA's advice and the decreasing trend of BSE in the European Union, these 25 Member States should be given the option of stopping testing of healthy cattle.

#### BSE Controls

- No cases of BSE have been found in healthy slaughtered cattle in the UK since 2009. Tissues/organs found to contain BSE infectivity (called Specified Risk Material – SRM) will continue to be removed from the food chain and destroyed, regardless of the declining epidemic. This is the key *food safety / public health* control measure for BSE.
- Feed controls are the key animal health control measure for BSE. UK reinforced its ban on the feeding of protein likely to be infected/ contaminated in August 1996, much earlier than the rest of the EU (2001).
- Prevalence of infection is significantly higher in residual pre-August 1996 population: these cattle are permanently excluded from food and feed chain, including export.

#### Surveillance of fallen and at risk cattle

- All cattle aged over 48 months, which are not slaughtered for human consumption, will continue to be tested for BSE.
- All cattle emergency slaughtered or found to be sick at ante mortem (fit for human consumption) aged over 48 months will continue to be tested for BSE. Also, all BSE suspects, regardless of age, will continue to be tested for BSE

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