



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

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Washington, D.C. 20250

## MEMORANDUM FROM THE ADMINISTRATORS

**FROM:**

W. Ron DeHaven  
Administrator  
APHIS

*W. R. DeHaven*

MAY 20 2004

Barbara Masters  
Acting Administrator  
FSIS

*Barbara Masters*

MAY 20 2004

**TO:**

VSMT  
Regional Directors/AVICs  
Veterinary Services  
District Managers  
Field Operations

**SUBJECT:** Policy statement regarding BSE sampling of condemned cattle at slaughter plants – for immediate implementation.

This notice serves as follow-up guidance to the joint memo of May 5, regarding BSE surveillance sampling at slaughter plants. These enhanced procedures will be effective June 1, 2004:

FSIS will collect samples for BSE testing from cattle at federal establishments as described below:

- All cattle – regardless of age, including veal calves - condemned by FSIS upon antemortem inspection for CNS impairment will be sampled for BSE by FSIS personnel. Of the cattle condemned every year, approximately 300 are condemned for signs of CNS impairment.
- All cattle – with the exception of veal calves – condemned by FSIS upon antemortem inspection for any reason other than CNS will be sampled for BSE by FSIS personnel.
- APHIS will coordinate with the FSIS State Liaison Director to assist in assuring sample collection from State-inspected facilities.
- FSIS (or the state inspector where applicable) will collect brain tissue samples from dead cattle that arrive and are offloaded on the premises of FSIS-inspected establishments.

Furthermore:

- APHIS will obtain samples from animals that are dead on arrival –but not offloaded -- through their routine sampling and agreements with deadstock facilities, renderers, and other animal disposal facilities.



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## **MEMORANDUM FROM THE ADMINISTRATORS**

Page 2

- In cases where APHIS has funded a technician to remain on the premises and take samples at FSIS-inspected establishments, that technician is under the oversight of the FSIS inspector-in-charge.
- FSIS and APHIS will work with plant management to ensure appropriate arrangements for removal or disposal of carcasses from sampled animals.
- FSIS and APHIS will consider alternative arrangements to test all cattle described above. Such arrangements may make use of previously established arrangements with deadstock facilities, renderers and other animal disposal facilities. These arrangements must include verification and documentation that cattle are sampled.
- USDA will establish a toll-free number for USDA employees and farmers/industry to call if they have any question or concern about BSE sampling. Calls will be routed to the appropriate APHIS Area Veterinarian in Charge for appropriate and timely follow-through, and AVIC's will be responsible for immediately elevating any issues that may potentially indicate a broader systemic problem. AVICs are also responsible for alerting the appropriate FSIS District Manager regarding any issues of joint concern.