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Report Highlights:

BSE cases continue to fall in most EU member states. This trend, together with new OIE guidelines and new scientific research, is forcing DG SANCO to rethink its BSE measures and to suggest amendments to it. These suggestions are grouped in the TSE Roadmap. The first amendments that have been proposed concerned changes in the BSE monitoring, relaxation of the rules on tallow and the end of the UK Over Thirty Month Scheme (OTMS). In June 2005, the European Food Safety Agency has published its BSE assessments of most South-American countries and of New-Zealand. Chile was classified under GBR III and Brazil under GBR II.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Brussels USEU [BE2]
[E3]

Number of BSE cases continues to fall in most EU member states

Country/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Austria	1	0	0	0	1*
Belgium	46	38	15	11	2*
Czech Republic	2	2	4	7	5*
Denmark	6	3	2	1	
Finland	1	0	0	0	
France	274	239	137	54	
Germany	125	106	54	65	22*
Greece	1	0	0	0	
Ireland	246	333	183	126	46*
Italy	48	38	29	7	3*
Luxembourg	0	1	0	0	0*
Netherlands	20	24	19	6	
Poland	0	4	5	11	14*
Portugal	110	86	133	92	13*
Slovakia	5	6	2	7	
Slovenia	1	1	1	2	1*
Spain	82	127	167	137	65*
Switzerland	42	24	21	3	3*
United Kingdom	1202	1144	611	343	121*
Total EU	2170	2152	1362	869	296
*	Austria - Data as of 22 June 2005.				
	Belgium- Data as of 31 July 2005.				
	Czech Republic - Data as of 31 August 2005.				
	Germany - Data as of 30 June 2005				
	Ireland- Data as of 4 September 2005				
	Italy- Data as of 21 April 2005.				
	Luxembourg - Data as of 31 August 2005.				
	Poland - Data as of 5 September 2005.				
	Portugal - Data as of 31 March 2005.				
	Slovenia - Data as of 24 August 2005.				
	Spain - Data as of 29 August 2005				
	United Kingdom - Data as of June 15 2005				

Source: Office International des Epizooties (OIE)¹

Numbers of BSE cases in most European member states have been falling steadily since they peaked in 2001. A few exceptions can be observed in the new member states (NMS), notably in Poland and the Czech Republic.

A new approach to BSE monitoring - TSE/BSE roadmap

In 2004, over 11 million BSE tests were carried out, of which 10 million in the EU-15 and one million in the NMS². The testing of 8.7 million healthy cattle at slaughter resulted in the detection of 155 BSE positives. The huge cost incurred in this testing of healthy cattle inspired the EC to amend its BSE monitoring procedures. New BSE/TSE monitoring regulations were proposed in the [TSE Roadmap](#)³. Apart from changing the monitoring

¹ http://www.oie.int/eng/info/en_esb.htm

² http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biosafety/bse/bse_cumul_12-01-04_en.pdf

³ http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biosafety/bse/roadmap_en.pdf

program, this roadmap also includes proposals to modify Specified Risk Material (SRM) standards, amending the feed ban, implementing the new OIE geographical classification system for BSE and guidance measures for the end of the UK Over Thirty Months scheme (OTMS). For more details on the TSE Roadmap, please refer to GAIN report [E35164](#)⁴.

Tallow

Tallow is one of the products that are expected to benefit from the relaxation of the rules concerning SRM's in the TSE Roadmap. On August 31, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) released an opinion that was adopted during the April 27 - 28 meeting of its Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ), titled "[Assessment of the human and animal BSE risk posed by tallow with respect to residual BSE](#)"⁵. The BIOHAZ panel concludes that the risk for BSE (cattle) and variant Creutzfeld-Jacob Disease (vCJD) cases (human) from exposure to tallow produced from a mixture of tissues with no specified bovine risk material removed sourced from cattle from a GBR IV (EC Geographical BSE Risk assessment) country in a worst case scenario would be 48,000 times less than the exposure of the UK population through food over the BSE epidemic. The panel further opines that exposure to tallow from GBR III countries, under which the U.S. was listed⁶, would be ten to one hundred times smaller and hence negligible. If DGSANCO follows suit, it can be expected that an amendment to the rules on tallow will be proposed. This amendment could eventually re-open the EU market for U.S. tallow exports.

End of the Over Thirty Month Scheme (OTMS)⁷

On August 15, 2005 the UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) released its "[REVIEW OF THE OVER THIRTY MONTHS \(OTM\) RULE: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE BSE TESTING REGIME](#)"⁸. In this paper, the FSA Board advises Ministers that a solid BSE testing program is functional and that the OTMS can be ended by the start of 2006. A new Older Cattle Disposal Scheme (OCDS) will ensure that cattle born August 1, 1996, which was the starting date of the feed ban on meat and bone meal (MBM), do not enter the food chain. Estimations are that more than 700 thousand cattle will have to be disposed off through this OCDS.

Changes in the European BSE GBR classification of third countries

In June 2005, EFSA adopted new risk assessments for several, mainly South-American, countries:

- GBR level I: Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina, Panama and New-Zealand
- GBR level II: Brazil
- GBR level III: Chile

When converted in EU legislation, this assessment will require Chile to remove SRM's from its beef exports. It will also have implications for Chile's exports of other cattle-derived products.

⁴ <http://www.fas.usda.gov/gainfiles/200508/146130644.pdf>

⁵ http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/biohaz/biohaz_opinions/1110_en.html

⁶ http://www.efsa.eu.int/press/press_release/575_en.html

⁷ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/bse/publichealth/otm/review/index.html>

⁸ <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/fsa050802.pdf>

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E34084	EU Approves €188 Million to Fight Animal Diseases in 2005	11/05/04
SI5006	Vet Authorities Confirm 6th Case of BSE	09/08/05
GM5029	BSE in Germany - Update covering the first half year of 2005	08/11/05
AU5010	Second Confirmed Case of BSE in Austria	06/30/05
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EZ5002	Czech Authorities Confirm 17th Case of BSE	02/10/05
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