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## **Austria**

### **Livestock and Products**

# **Austria's First BSE Case; Update 1 2001**

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#### **Report Highlights:**

**The cause of infection remains under investigation in Austria's first BSE case. When the tests of the reference laboratory will confirm BSE, all cattle of the farm will be culled. The farmer will receive compensation. So far, no decline in beef consumption has taken place.**

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Includes PSD changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Vienna[AU1], AU

## Austria's First BSE Case; Update 1

### Summary

The farm, where the BSE cow originated remains quarantined until a positive test is confirmed by the reference laboratory. Then, all cattle of the farm will be culled. Carcasses will be rendered into meat and bone meal, which will then be incinerated. The farmer will be compensated for the losses due to culling. No meat and bone meal or other illegal products were found on the farm. In contrast to January, when media reported about a suspected BSE case in Austria, no decline in beef consumption has been noticed so far. End summary.

Austrian experts continue searching for the origin of the recent BSE disease, but, so far, no explanation has been found.

The farm in Gross-Hobarten, from where the BSE cow came, remains quarantined. The cow was born on this farm and her mother was also born and raised there.

Feeds on the farm were tested but no meat and bone meal was found. (Comment: In Austria meat and bone meal has been banned in ruminant feeds since 1990, a general ban for all meat and bone meals was implemented on January 1, 2001.) Thus, experts are speculating that before the general meat and bone meal ban, traces of meat and bone meal may have come as impurities into cattle feed. Some experts also voiced the possibility of a spontaneous BSE development in cattle.

As soon as test results from a Swiss reference laboratory are available (expected on December 13), culling of all 60 cattle of the farm in question will be carried out. (Comment: Austrian veterinary authorities are quite sure that the test will be BSE positive.) According to the Austrian contingency plan, a commission will evaluate the cattle and compensate the farmer. At present, the value of a cow is US\$ 1,300 - 1,700.

Since slaughter houses do not want to slaughter these cattle because of the required disinfection, culling will be carried out on a special place near the farm under the supervision of several official veterinarians and from each cow above 20 months, a brain sample will be taken for testing. The carcasses will be processed into meat and bone meal by one of Austria's four rendering plants. The meat and bone meal will be incinerated.

In contrast to the suspected BSE case in January, when beef consumption immediately dropped significantly, this time beef sales did not decline. This seems to be confirmed by poultry and fish shops, which have not noticed increased sales of their products. Probably consumers believe health authorities, who frequently assure them that beef

entering the market is safe.