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### **On-Farm Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Prevention Inspections Starting Soon.**



Under a contract with Federal Food & Drug Administration (FDA), the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) will again this year be performing on-farm BSE prevention inspections. CDA inspectors, under FDA authority, will be visiting farms to ensure compliance with the "BSE Rule" (21 CFR 589.2000- *Animal Proteins Prohibited in Ruminant Feed*).

BSE was first recognized in the United Kingdom (UK) in November 1986. It was not long before it was discovered that the prion protein thought to be the infectious agent was transmitted through feed, and specifically, meat and bone meal. Research and testing done in the UK found that a normal cow that was fed one gram of BSE-infected tissue, only once, developed BSE.

Cattle with BSE, commonly referred to as "Mad Cow Disease," display behavioral, gait and postural abnormalities. Early in the disease, affected animals may display increased apprehension, be sensitive to sound and touch and have a swaying gait. As the disease progresses, the affected animals stumble, fall and eventually cannot stand up. It ends with coma, seizure and death. There is no cure or treatment for this disease and it kills 100% of its victims.

In an effort to prevent a BSE outbreak in the U.S., and to better respond to such an outbreak, the FDA passed the BSE Rule in 1997 and began inspecting for compliance with the rule shortly thereafter. The BSE rule applies to renderers, blenders, feed manufacturers, feeders, mixers, distributors and haulers. The rule can be found on the [FDA Federal Register Rules and Regulations](#) page.

The BSE Rule prohibits feeding cattle and other ruminants (sheep, elk, deer, etc.) certain ingredients referred to as "prohibited materials." "Prohibited materials" include some commonly used protein feed ingredients made from ruminant body parts, such as meat and bone meal made from muscle, organs, and bones.

Feed manufacturers, beef feedlots, and dairies are among the firms that will be inspected by the CDA. During the inspections, managers will be asked general questions about the firm's operation and more specific questions about the firm's feeding practices. The CDA inspectors will review records pertaining to the receipt of feeds and feed ingredients and will physically inspect the feeding and feed manufacturing areas.

Nationally, over 21,600 firms have been inspected for compliance with the BSE Rule to date. Most of these inspections were conducted by state employees. The Colorado on-farm inspections performed under last year's FDA contract showed no violations. For further information, please visit the Colorado Department of Agriculture's [BSE Prevention Information webpage](#).