

## **PREVENTION AND SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES FOR BSE**

**BSE has never been detected in Florida.** The disease BSE, more technically known as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, has been a problem in cattle in Britain and other European countries. BSE is believed to have developed after the feeding of contaminated mammalian tissue to cows, a practice that is prohibited in the United States and in Florida. In the United States cattle are generally fed on grass and on grain based feeds.

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services through our regulatory programs routinely inspects livestock markets, ranches, dairies, and slaughter operations to ensure the healthy condition of cattle, inspects feed manufacturers to ensure that no prohibited proteins are being used, and inspects all the retail food stores in the state to remove any prohibited food products from sale. Since 1997, the feeding of mammalian tissue to cattle has been prohibited in the United States and Florida.

In addition, the Department works closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Service, as well as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to protect food safety and animal health.

Please check the Department websites for the Division of Animal Industry at <http://doacs.state.fl.us/ai/aiindex.htm> for any further questions or details on BSE or call the State Veterinarian's office at 1-877-815-0034. In addition, please review the BSE materials located on the USDA website at [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

### **ANIMAL FEED ISSUES**

- The feeding of mammalian/ruminant tissue to cows/ruminants was banned in 1997 in Florida and the United States
- \* DACS has communicated this prohibition to all feed manufacturers and conducted inspections of feed manufacturers to ensure compliance
- \* Review of internal producer practices to ensure no prohibited materials are being added to animal feeds
- \* Annual inspection of all feed manufacturers to assure that prohibited proteins are not mixed with feed
- \* Provided information to the feed retail dealers and feed producers on regulations and restrictions
- Further education to industry through mail outs to industry, distribution during inspections and on line information

### **ANIMAL HEALTH ISSUES**

- \* **No positive BSE samples have ever been detected in Florida or the United States**
- \* In 1996, DACS initiated an aggressive program of sampling any animals with any neurological symptoms at farms and ranches or any kill plant or sampled at the diagnostic laboratories
- \* Samples of brain tissues are taken by DACS and forwarded to National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) of USDA in Ames, Iowa for testing for BSE

- \* Florida exceeded by 200% the recommended sampling level for BSE in cows in 2001
- \* Major thrust in education to dairy and cattle producers, extension, Cattlemen's Association, Dairy Association, Florida Veterinary Medical Association, veterinarians, livestock markets (13), and direct distribution from field force. Thrust of education was to prevent any feeding of prohibited animal proteins to other animals and to alert all susceptible animal owners of the reporting of any neurological signs

### **FOOD SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

- Conducted numerous inspections of retail food stores both general firms and those specializing in importation of British and European food products to ensure public could not buy prohibited foods for human consumption.

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