

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

# FSIS NOTICE

28-04

5/20/04

## FSIS SAMPLE COLLECTION FROM CATTLE CONDEMNED DURING ANTE-MORTEM INSPECTION FOR THE BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPHATHY (BSE) SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

***NOTE: FSIS PERSONNEL ARE NOT TO IMPLEMENT THE SAMPLE COLLECTION PROCEDURES IN THIS NOTICE UNTIL JUNE 1, 2004***

### I. PURPOSE

This notice contains updated information from FSIS Notice 18-03, dated 5/27/03. That notice expires on 6/1/04. In light of recent events, FSIS will be collecting brain samples from cattle at federally-inspected establishments for the purpose of BSE testing. Therefore, FSIS is issuing new sample collection, documentation, and shipping procedures to inspection program personnel, particularly Public Health Veterinarians (PHVs). Specifically trained FSIS PHVs will collect the brain samples. The samples will be shipped to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa, or another APHIS-designated laboratory.

### II. BACKGROUND

BSE is a reportable disease in the United States. In cooperation with FSIS, APHIS leads an ongoing, comprehensive, interagency surveillance program for BSE. Using the Federal Meat Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C. 603, part of the FSIS ante-mortem examination and inspection procedure will include the collection of a brain sample from cattle. For the first time, FSIS PHVs will collect brain samples from cattle that are condemned during ante-mortem inspection at federally-inspected establishments. The APHIS Area Veterinary Inspector-in-Charge (AVIC) will focus upon sample collection activities by APHIS at locations other than federally-inspected establishments (e.g., rendering operations and on-farm). FSIS PHVs will take samples from all cattle showing signs of central nervous system (CNS) disorders, as well as the types of cattle that may be at higher risk for being infected with the agent believed to cause BSE, based, in part, on European data. These cattle, while at federally-inspected establishments, are under

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T/A Inspectors; Plant Mgt; TRA;  
ABB; TSC; Import Offices

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the control of FSIS and will have the brain sample collected either by the trained FSIS PHV or an available APHIS technician with direct supervision and oversight by the FSIS PHV.

Under FSIS Notice 18-03 FSIS contacted APHIS whenever specific cattle were presented for ante-mortem inspection (e.g., cattle exhibiting CNS symptoms). The notice also stated that an APHIS veterinarian will be responsible for collecting the brain sample. When FSIS Notice 18-03 expires on June 1, 2004, APHIS will no longer collect the brain samples.

As instructed in this notice, FSIS personnel will collect brain samples from ante-mortem condemned cattle, and especially from any cattle exhibiting CNS symptoms, and will submit the samples to APHIS for analysis. APHIS will no longer collect brain samples at FSIS-inspected establishments.

### **III. Should the FSIS PHV have an awareness meeting with the establishment regarding the BSE testing process?**

A. Yes, before June 1, 2004, the FSIS PHV needs to meet with the establishment to explain the procedure for the collection of brain samples for BSE testing. At this meeting, the FSIS PHV and management should discuss:

1. the FSIS procedures set forth in this notice.
2. how the establishment will ensure that ante-mortem condemned cattle will be segregated from other cattle,
3. whether the establishment will remove the head under the direct supervision of the FSIS PHV, or whether the FSIS PHV will have to remove the head,
4. whether the establishment has existing arrangements with APHIS under which the establishment delivers the carcass to deadstock facilities, renderers, or other animal disposition facilities so that APHIS can collect brain samples. If so, the FSIS PHV is to notify his or her District Office (DO).
5. how the establishment will hold the ante-mortem condemned animal (head and carcass) until removal from the premise,
6. how the establishment will dispose of the condemned carcass (i.e., picked up by renderer, sent to a landfill) and that the establishment is to maintain records, as required in 9 CFR 320.1, regarding the disposition of the condemned carcasses, and
7. that the establishment may obtain additional information about the sampling program from <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/bse/bse.html>.

B. In a memorandum of interview, the FSIS PHV is to document who was present at the awareness meeting, the date and time of the meeting, what was discussed and decided regarding the issues above, and any documents that were shared with management.

C. The FSIS PHV is to maintain a copy of the memorandum of interview in the official government file, provide a copy to the plant management, and electronically mail a copy to the APHIS AVIC.

**IV. Who, in FSIS, will collect the brain tissue sample?**

Trained FSIS PHVs will collect the sample from ante-mortem condemned cattle. FSIS, along with APHIS, will sponsor a special sample collection training session prior to June 1, 2004. Most establishments with a history of having ante-mortem condemned cattle will soon have a trained FSIS PHV on-site. Other establishments, such as those in remote locations, may have a trained FSIS PHV come to the establishment to collect samples. Still, other establishments may have an APHIS technician on-site to collect samples. However, the APHIS technician will, for purposes of brain sample collection, collect the sample with direct supervision by the FSIS PHV.

**V. What cattle will be sampled by FSIS for BSE surveillance purposes?**

A. All ante-mortem condemned cattle at federally-inspected establishments will have a portion of the brain collected by the specially trained FSIS PHV, except for 1) cattle that are 400 pounds or less (which may be referred to as “veal calves”) with characteristics of immature cattle, condemned by the FSIS PHV but that do not exhibit CNS signs, and 2) cattle condemned on ante-mortem inspection that the establishment elects to have treated pursuant to 9 CFR 309.13(b).

B. The FSIS PHV or the APHIS technician under the supervisory authority of the FSIS PHV, will collect the brain sample from cattle condemned by the FSIS PHV during ante-mortem inspection at the federally-inspected establishment. Cattle off-loaded from the transport vehicle onto the premises of the federally-inspected establishment, whether dead or alive, will be sampled by the FSIS PHV for BSE after the cattle have been condemned during ante-mortem inspection. In addition, cattle passing ante-mortem inspection but later found dead prior to slaughter will be condemned and be sampled by the FSIS PHV. The FSIS PHV is to make all final disposition decisions regarding whether cattle should be condemned in accordance with 9 CFR part 309.

**VI. What information will the FSIS PHV maintain regarding the identity of condemned cattle?**

The FSIS PHV will ensure the collection and documentation of all animal identification associated with cattle condemned during ante-mortem inspection that are to be sampled by FSIS. The FSIS PHV is to attach the “U. S. Condemned” tag cattle condemned during ante-mortem inspection in accordance with 9 CFR 309.13. The FSIS PHV is to also ensure that available records associated with the documentation of the ownership of the cattle are maintained along with a file on each BSE-sampled animal. This documentation will facilitate trace back in the event that the sample result is positive for BSE. The documentation should include records in accordance with 9 CFR 320.1. **NOTE:** The slaughter establishment should not be considered the owner of the animal as a default. Once the brain sample has been collected from the head

and all animal identification has been recorded and removed, the head and remainder of the animal are to be disposed of in accordance with 9 CFR 314. The establishment is to ensure that insanitary conditions do not result from inappropriate holding of the head and carcass while the condemned material is awaiting pick-up by a renderer or by other means of transport or disposal.

**VII. What is the process for ensuring that the condemned cattle (e.g., the carcass and head minus the brain sample) are removed from the establishment?**

The FSIS PHV should ensure that insanitary conditions are not created by the presence of the condemned cattle (9 CFR part 416). The establishment is responsible for the disposal of the condemned cattle in accordance with 9 CFR part 314. In cases in which the establishment cannot obtain transport services for removal of the condemned cattle in a timely manner, the establishment should contact the APHIS AVIC. Also, the establishment is to maintain records regarding the disposition of the condemned cattle in accordance with 9 CFR 320.1.

**VIII. How will the cattle be handled in order for the FSIS PHV to collect the brain tissue sample?**

A. If condemned cattle are alive, the establishment is required to humanely euthanize the cattle, in accordance with 9 CFR 309.13. The head should be removed as quickly as possible in order to collect the brain sample. If the establishment does not make arrangements to remove the head, the FSIS PHV should notify the Front-line Supervisor that the brain sample collection will need to be taken as a priority over other ante-mortem or post-mortem procedures.

B. The brain sample should be collected either in the inedible area of the establishment or other area set aside for such collection in which edible product cannot become adulterated due to the creation of an insanitary condition. The establishment, APHIS technician, and FSIS personnel are to take proper sanitary measures before returning to edible areas of the establishment after brain sample collection, in accordance with 9 CFR 416.5.

**IX. Will the FSIS PHV receive special sample boxes and instructions for shipping the sample?**

A. Establishments with a history of high ante-mortem condemnation rates for slaughter will be identified by FSIS and the FSIS PHV at these establishments will receive multiple special sample boxes and shipping instructions from APHIS. Establishments without a history of high ante-mortem condemnation rates for slaughter will be identified by FSIS and the FSIS PHV at these establishments ultimately will receive sample boxes and shipping instructions from APHIS. The brain samples will be shipped to the APHIS NVSL or other designated laboratory, but not to an FSIS laboratory. (See Attachment 1).

B. After June 1, 2004, if cattle are condemned at ante-mortem inspection and the trained FSIS PHV does not have a special sample box and shipping instructions, the brain sample is to be collected by the FSIS PHV and put into a plastic bag and securely stored in a cooler (not a freezer). The sample is not to pass through or to be stored in

areas of the establishment where edible product is produced. This may mean that the sample has to be stored under refrigeration outside of the official establishment. If there is no trained FSIS PHV or APHIS technician immediately available to collect the brain sample, the FSIS PHV should have the establishment save the head, brain intact, and place the head in a cooler (not a freezer) to reduce post-mortem autolysis of the brain. The head should be placed into a plastic bag and securely stored as explained above.

**X. What is included in the special sample box and shipping instructions?**

The special sample box from APHIS will include a sample collection kit (e.g., equipment to obtain the brain sample, a tube for placing the packaged sample within the shipping container, and identifying labels to affix to the sample). The FSIS PHV is to enter the “U.S. Condemned” tag number onto the APHIS-supplied forms. FSIS should record any APHIS identifying bar code labels onto the FSIS condemnation certificate. The shipping container will be picked up by FedEx, using the APHIS contract for overnight shipping. If there is a problem with the FedEx pickup of BSE samples, the FSIS PHV should contact the DO. The DO will contact the APHIS contact person responsible for the APHIS FedEx contract. **NOTE:** In situations where the last FedEx pick-up for the day has been missed or the sample is collected on a day when FedEx does not pick up, store the samples as discussed in paragraph IX. B. until the next available FedEx pick up day.

**XI. What information will the FSIS PHV identify on the condemnation report and the APHIS sample request form?**

The FSIS PHV will continue to complete the condemnation form, FSIS Form 6000-13, (Certification of Ante-mortem or Post-mortem Disposition of Tagged Animals) and FSIS Form 6150-1 (Identification Tag – Ante-mortem). The FSIS PHV should pay special attention when providing a full description of the reason for the condemnation on FSIS Form 6000-13 and fully fill out FSIS Form 6150-1 (i.e., identification, breed, sex, reason for tag, and clinical signs). In addition, the FSIS PHV is to include similar information on the APHIS sample request form, including the estimated age of the cattle (see <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=/ofotsc/index.htm>.) The FSIS PHV should give special consideration to any age documentation that accompanies cattle to the federally-inspected establishment, in lieu of a dentition determination.

**XII. How will sample results be reported?**

APHIS NVSL will report the sample result to the establishment. FSIS is working with APHIS on a process to also include the FSIS PHV in the reporting of the sample result.

**XIII. Will the FSIS PHV collect samples from healthy-appearing cattle that are not condemned?**

The details regarding the testing of healthy appearing cattle 30 months of age and older by FSIS or APHIS is still under discussion. This group of cattle is much less likely to demonstrate BSE infectivity than those that show CNS symptoms or that have died on-farm or otherwise, or that are ante-mortem condemned. Thus, the details for the portion of the BSE surveillance program involving healthy-appearing cattle will issue in a separate FSIS notice at a later date.

**XIV. What form will the FSIS PHV complete to record each sample taken?**

The FSIS PHV will complete FSIS Form 5000-9, BSE Sampling Tracking Sheet located in *MS Outlook, Public Folders, All Public Folders, Agency Issuances, Forms, FSIS 5000 series* to report every sample collected. To facilitate APHIS reimbursement for the sample, the FSIS PHV will send a hard copy of the Form to the Financial Processing Center, Financial Management Division.

Refer questions to the Technical Assistance and Correlation Division, Technical Service Center at (402) 221-7400.

*Philip S. Derfler /s/*

Deputy Administrator  
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development

**Designated Laboratories for BSE Sample Submission**

<b>State where sample was collected</b>	<b>Designated laboratory</b>
Arizona, California, Nevada	California Animal Health and Food Safety Lab System University of California – Davis, CA
Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming	Colorado State University Veterinary Diagnostic Lab Ft. Collins, CO
Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Texas	Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory College Station, TX
Minnesota (or NVSL), Wisconsin	Wisconsin Animal Health Laboratory Madison, WI
Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington	Washington State University Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab Pullman, WA
Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia	Athens Diagnostic Laboratory, College of Veterinary Medicine University of Georgia; Athens, GA
Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania (all Pennsylvania), Rhode Island, Vermont	NY State College of Veterinary Medicine Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Cornell University Ithaca, NY
Alaska, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota (or WI), Ohio, Puerto Rico, West Virginia	USDA, APHIS, National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) Ames, IA