

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Trader Notice MH 11/2015

To: All Food Business Operators at Approved Meat Establishments

Subject: Cessation of BSE Sampling of Healthy cattle over 72 Months

[This Trader Notice replaces 08/2013 in relation to BSE sampling of healthy cattle over 72 months]

Background

Commission Decision 2009/719/EC authorises certain Member States, including Ireland, to revise their annual BSE monitoring programmes. [Commission Decision 2013/76](#) permits monitoring to be limited to certain at risk categories of bovine animals (fallen stock, casualty animals, on-farm-emergency slaughtered animals) and to stop BSE monitoring in all healthy slaughter animals.

In Ireland, from **Monday 4th March, 2013 there is no longer a requirement to test healthy cattle over 72 months of age for BSE.**

Scope

This Trader Notice describes the cessation of BSE sampling of all healthy cattle over 72 months of age and defines the remaining categories of animals that are required to be sampled for BSE.

Reason for Revision (June 2015)

1. Subsequent to the implementation of Commission Decision 2013/76 Croatia joined the EU and cattle from there are subject to the same BSE sampling rules as cattle from Romania and Bulgaria.
2. The previous version of the Trader Notice did not include the requirement to BSE sample imported cattle from Third Countries if they are over 30 months of age.

Procedure

The animal categories that require to be sampled for BSE are:

1. Casualties (with or without Veterinary Certificates) ***over 48 months*** of age
2. Emergency Slaughter animals ***over 48 months*** of age
3. Animals ***over 48 months*** which are deemed to be casualties following Ante-mortem examination.
4. On-Farm Emergency Slaughter Animals ***over 48 months*** of age.
5. Imported animals from **Romania, Croatia and Bulgaria** over ***30 months*** of age.
6. Imported animals from **Third Countries** over ***30 months*** of age

Categories 1 to 6 are to be sampled by the FBO in accordance with current procedures.

Sample Collection and Storage

In view of the expected small numbers of samples being collected on a weekly basis, the National Reference laboratory for BSE has confirmed that it is acceptable to hold BSE samples in chilled storage for up to 3 days before dispatch to an RTL. If the samples are transported twice a week to the RTLs, there should be no issue with autolysis affecting identification of optimal sampling site. In *exceptional* circumstances, where samples have to be held for longer, they may be frozen in the factory as soon as possible after taking them.

Organisation of Slaughter of Eligible Animal Categories

Ideally, eligible animals should be slaughtered at the end of the kill with a small gap after the last healthy animal. However, for welfare reasons, it is often necessary to slaughter injured animals during the slaughter of healthy cattle. If this is the case then it will be necessary to detain ***one carcass before and two carcasses after*** the sampled eligible carcass(es) until negative results are received. This detention of additional carcasses may be avoided if there is a ***spatial separation*** after the previous healthy carcass and ***targeted clean-up*** after any sampled eligible animals.

Security of Samples, Carcasses, Offal and ABPs pending results

BSE samples not dispatched on the day must be held securely under official veterinary control in locked Veterinary Office refrigerators.

Sampled carcasses, adjacent healthy carcasses (if relevant), offal, spinal cord and other ABPs must be held under official detention until negative results of BSE tests are received.

FBOs may include disposal of ABPs (except head and spinal cord from sampled carcass) as Cat 1 in their SOP.

Role of the FBO

FBOs are required to amend their BSE SOP to take account of the removal of the requirement to BSE test healthy cattle over 72 months of age and the additional requirements of this Trader Notice.

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Meat Hygiene Division
23rd June 2015