



February 9, 2001

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD 20737

Subject: Restriction of the Importation of all Ruminant Meat, Meat Products and Other Edible Protein Products from Countries Affected by Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE).

To: U.S. Importers, Brokers and Other Interested Parties

As you are probably aware, the European Union (EU) Scientific Steering Committee has recently determined that animal feed which was not derived from ruminants has been cross-contaminated with the agent responsible for BSE. Moreover, it is believed that cross-contamination of ruminant feed with nonruminant feed has prolonged the BSE epidemic in Europe. As a result, the EU has suspended the use of all processed animal proteins in feed for food animals, effective January 1, 2001.

APHIS believes that the current situation in BSE-affected countries is a potential threat to the health and safety of U.S. livestock. Therefore, APHIS is taking emergency measures to mitigate this risk and to protect livestock, livestock producers, and industries in the United States.

Effective February 9, 2001, we are suspending the importation of ruminant meat, meat products, and other edible products that have been stored, processed, or otherwise associated with a facility located in Europe and Oman. Material shipped on or before February 9, 2001 will be considered for entry **only** if the official Veterinary Health Certificate of the exporting country was issued on or before February 9, 2001.

All other importations will not be eligible for entry until APHIS can verify that these products have not been commingled or cross-contaminated with ruminant products from Europe and Oman. In making this determination the following criteria will be considered and verified by APHIS:

- All steps of processing and storage are carried out in a dedicated foreign facility,
- The foreign facility should have a cooperative service agreement with APHIS,
- The facility should demonstrate that material intended for export to the United States was transported in a manner that would prevent cross-contamination with prohibited materials,
- The foreign facility should allow periodic APHIS inspection, and
- The facility should supply government certification regarding the dedicated processing facility.

Importations from Europe and Oman are affected by this action. These countries are listed in Title 9 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 94.18(a)(1) and (2), as well as



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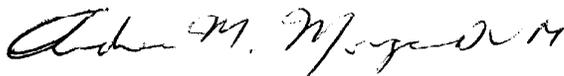
2

on the APHIS home page at www.aphis.usda.gov. Oman is included in this action because it is listed in the CFR as being affected with BSE.

An interim rule concerning this action is being prepared and will be published in the Federal Register in the near future.

I ask for your immediate cooperation in discontinuing all shipments of ruminant meat, meat products, and other edible products that have been stored, processed, or associated in any way with products or processing plants in Europe or Oman.

I am aware that this prohibition places a burden upon you. However, APHIS' obligation to protect U.S. agriculture is paramount. The steps we are taking are absolutely necessary to meet that obligation and prevent BSE from occurring in U.S. livestock. Thank you for your cooperation and support.



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