

## Major Breakthrough with World Organization for Animal Health



In the April issue of *Render*, the World Renderers Organization wrote an article regarding proposed changes from a September 2021 report from the ad hoc group of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (TAHSC) at the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). These changes would have resulted in possible international trade disruption of the cattle meat and bone meal.

With pride, the WRO presents the results of our efforts to ensure science-based international trade rules regarding the BSE chapters in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code.

The changes recommended by the OIE's BSE ad hoc group in the recently released OIE report (*Report of the Meeting of The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission, Paris, 1–11 February 2022, PART A*), regarding the recommendations for the international trade of rendered products reflect nearly total acceptance of WRO requests. (See the April issue of *Render* for a thorough discussion of the potential impacts on the international trade of cattle protein meal).

WRO's evaluation of the improved February 2022 Report regarding BSE chapters is very positive, and we believe that most of the renderers affiliated with the WRO will be in compliance with the OIE's new proposed recommendations for the international trade. The BSE ad hoc group withdrew its September 2021 proposition regarding new restrictions for negligible risk countries by establishing a "new feed-banned specified risk material" to the international trade of protein meals. Negligible risk countries will no longer be submitted to such "new feed-banned SRM."

The full report can be downloaded at the OIE website: <https://www.oie.int/app/uploads/2022/03/a-tahsc-feb-2022-reporta.pdf>. The relevant articles are 11.4.12, 11.4.13, 11.4.14, 11.4.15, and 11.4.15.bis. (pages 94-96).

The overall evaluation regarding the BSE chapters 11.4. and 1.8 is very positive, adjusting the OIE recommendation for all members regarding the veterinary system requisites, the BSE risk assessment, the disease-surveillance strategy and the mitigations tools.

The WRO would like to highlight one very important advance from the TAHSC February Report regarding rendered products. For the very first time, OIE is including the industry association guidance, standards, audits, good practices and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) as valid mitigation measures regarding the BSE-risk country status:

"Indicate if there are any industry associations or organisations involved in the rendering industry that provide guidance, set standards or provide third party audits in relation to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) programmes, good manufacturing practices, etc. Include a description of their role, membership and interaction with the Veterinary Services or other Competent Authority" (Article 1.8.5.2.a. Livestock industry practices).

Having said that, programs like the North American Renderers Association's Animal Protein Producers Industry, Australian Renderers Association's Hygienic Rendering Program and the Brazilian Renderers Association's *Abra que Aqui Tem Qualidade* may become even more important for the veterinary official services, both nationally and internationally.

Another change proposed at the February 2022 TAHSC is the adoption in the glossary of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of a proper definition for animal meal: "(Animal meal) means any final or intermediate solid protein-containing product, obtained when animal tissues are rendered, excluding peptides of a molecular weight less than 10,000 daltons and amino-acids."

WRO understands products with low molecular weight (e.g., products processed by an enzymatic pathway) are not subjected to the BSE chapter, and could be classified as safe commodities.

But there are two changes proposed for adoption by the OIE's BSE ad hoc group the WRO does not agree with. The first is a position that atypical BSE hold amplification risk, which goes against the WRO technical position. If atypical BSE is presumed to pose amplification risk, future regulatory actions will be uncertain and could impair the international trade in unforeseen ways. This change will force all renderers to stay alert regarding international health certifications agreed on among various countries. WRO's understanding is this position has almost no chance of being changed, since the ad hoc group strongly backs it.

The second change WRO disagreed with is a bit complex. For better understanding, one must first read the articles below:

### Article 11.4.12.

**Recommendations for importation of cattle-derived protein meal from a country, zone or compartment posing a negligible BSE risk**

Veterinary authorities should require the presentation of an international veterinary certificate attesting that the

cattle from which the protein meal was derived were identified through an animal identification system and were born and kept in a country, zone or compartment posing a negligible BSE risk, and

**EITHER**

1) they were born after the date from which the risk of BSE agents being recycled within the cattle population has been demonstrated to be negligible;

**OR**

2) the protein meal was processed in accordance with Article 11.4.17.

**Article 11.4.17.**

**The following procedure should be used to reduce the infectivity of any BSE agents that may be present during the production of protein meal containing ruminant proteins:**

- 1) The raw material should be reduced to a maximum particle size of 50 mm before heating.
- 2) The raw material should be heated under saturated steam conditions to a temperature of not less than 133°C for a minimum of 20 minutes at an absolute pressure of 3 bar.

These two chapters, when evaluated together, indicate for a negligible risk country to have its cattle protein meal classified as a BSE-safe commodity, it must adhere to the following:

1. Rendered cattle raw material is absent of cattle born before “the risk of BSE agents being recycled within the cattle population has been demonstrated to be negligible.” In other words, the commodity should not have cattle born eight years before the country achieved negligible status. For instance:
2. **Australia/New Zealand/Argentina** – recognized as negligible by OIE in 2007. Cattle no older than 23 years can be used as raw material for exporting rendered products.  
**Denmark** – recognized as negligible by OIE in 2011. Cattle no older than 19 years can be used as raw material for exporting rendered product.  
**Brazil** – recognized as negligible by OIE in 2012. Cattle no older than 18 years can be used as raw material for exporting rendered products.

**U.S.** – recognized as negligible by OIE in 2013. Cattle no older than 17 years can be used as raw material for exporting rendered products.

**Mexico** – recognized as negligible by OIE in 2016. Cattle no older than 14 years can be used as raw material for exporting rendered products.

**Canada** – recognized as negligible by OIE in 2021. Cattle no older than 9 years can be used as raw material for exporting rendered products.

**OR**

3. Having the protein meal, cattle older than “the risk of BSE agents being recycled within the cattle population has been demonstrated to be negligible,” the meal should meet the procedure prescribed at the Article 11.4.17, in order to reduce the BSE infectivity (133oC, 20 minutes, 3 absolute bars).

Since this article only applies to when old cattle are rendered, this recommendation will focus on the reduction solely of atypical BSE cases (the vast majority of classical BSE cases occurred with cattle younger than 8 years old).

The WRO requested to OIE that other procedures or processes should be allowed at the article 11.4.17, in order to reduce the infectivity of atypical BSE agents. One well-known and used mitigation measure adopted by several

countries is the brain and spinal cord removal at the slaughterhouse. If done with all cattle, the atypical BSE infectivity reduction carried in a cattle protein meal, absent of brain and spinal cord, may be even superior of the thermal treatment established at the article 11.4.17.

The WRO already sent an officer to OIE requesting that further mitigation procedures or processes should be included in the Article 11.4.17. If the change does not take place now, then WRO will keep requesting to OIE that this minor review takes place soon by defending our understanding with facts, science, patience and perseverance.

## Conclusions

Regardless of the two situations at the TAHSC February 2022 report with which WRO disagrees, the major advances and benefits for the cattle chain that will be adopted at the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the OIE regarding the BSE chapters overwhelm the minor issues with which we disagree.

The WRO congratulates all technicians involved in this remarkable achievement and also sends our compliments to the OIE’s TAHSC that opened space for WRO to give a proper explanation of its positions within a very collaborative environment. **R**



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