

To: Lead Food Officers
Cc: REHIS
CoSLA

25 April 2008

Reference: ENF/S/08/020

Dear Colleagues,

**THE TRANSMISSIBLE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHIES (SCOTLAND)
AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2008**

Further to my letter of 26 October 2007 (issued on 31 October 2007) seeking your views and comments on the above draft Regulations, I am writing to let you know that after considering the responses to the consultation, and following amendments to Regulation (EC) 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Community TSE Regulations), the above Regulations have now been made and will **come into force on 26 April 2008**.

The above Regulations **will apply to animals slaughtered on or after 26 April 2008** and have the following effect:

- (i) The age at which bovine VC is classified as SRM has been increased from 24 months to 30 months (for animals slaughtered on or after 26 April), following an amendment to the Community TSE Regulations. Therefore from 26 April, only VC of bovine animals aged over 30 months at slaughter (slaughtered on or after 26 April 2008) would be SRM. Consequently, it will no longer be required to remove VC from under 30 month bovines (slaughtered on or after 26 April 2008) prior to sale.
- (ii) As a result local authorities will no longer be required to authorise butchers to remove VC from 24-30 month bovine carcasses (slaughtered on or after 26 April) as butchers no longer require specific authorisation to do so. All butchers premises will now be able to handle, process and remove VC from bovines under 30 months at slaughter (and slaughtered on or after 26 April) if they wish.
- (iii) VC will still be SRM in those bovines aged 24-30 months at slaughter which were slaughtered before 26 April 2008; the VC from these carcasses will still have to be removed and disposed of as SRM. Transitional provisions in the above Regulations will allow VC SRM to be removed from 24-30 months carcasses slaughtered before 26 April that may still be in the distribution chain. In particular, the transitional arrangements allow:
 - **Slaughterhouses: until 24 May 2008** to consign carcasses containing VC SRM derived from 24-30 months animals slaughtered before 26 April 2008 to



authorised butchers (authorised on or before 25 April 2008) and/or cutting plants (whether or not authorised under paragraph 12(1)(a)).

- **Cutting plants: until 31 May 2008** to remove VC SRM from 24-30 animals slaughtered before 26 April 2008.
- **Authorised butchers: until 31 May** to remove VC SRM from 24-30 months animals slaughtered before 26 April 2008. This applies only to butchers which were authorised at 25 April 2008.

Therefore local authorities will continue to have enforcement responsibilities at authorised butchers until 31 May 2008.

Following the transitional period, all 24-30 months carcasses (derived from bovine animals slaughtered before 26 April 2008) containing VC SRM will need to be treated as animal by product.

- (iv) There is no change to the current requirements to clearly identify meat containing VC that is not SRM with a blue stripe. All meat containing VC derived from bovine animals under 30 months at slaughter must be clearly marked with a blue stripe on the label. As butchers are only allowed to handle meat containing VC derived from bovine under 30 months, **all meat containing VC at butchers premises must be marked with a blue stripe.**
- (v) There is also no change to the current requirement requiring specific authorisation for cutting plants to remove VC from over thirty month (OTM) bovines. Only cutting plants authorised under paragraph 12(1)(a) of the above Regulations can remove VC from OTM bovines. **It therefore continues to be an offence for any other cutting plant or butchers to remove VC from OTM bovines.**
- (vi) Revocation of the Beef Bones Regulations 1999 will allow UK sourced beef bones to be used in food manufacturing. However, the current prohibition on the use of bones or bone-in cuts of bovine, ovine and caprine animals in the production of mechanically separated meat (MSM) means that beef bones **cannot** be used in the production of MSM.

Full details of the consultation, including a summary of responses received and a Regulatory Impact Assessment can be found on our website at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/consultations/consultscot/2007/tsescotamend2007>

I attach a copy of our letter to authorised butchers and operators of meat plants in Scotland informing them of the above changes for your records.

Yours faithfully

Jacqui Angus
Senior Enforcement Advisor
Food Standards Agency Scotland

Background Note

C. bovis is a parasite (*Taenia saginata*) with cattle as its main intermediate host where the larval form in these animals is a cysticercus in the muscles and heart. Man can become infected (as part of another stage in the lifecycle of *C. Bovis*) by ingestion of undercooked or raw meat.

Meat found infected with *C. bovis* at post-mortem inspection is to be declared unfit for human consumption. However, when the carcass is not generally infected the parts not infected can be declared fit for human consumption after having undergone a cold treatment. (*Regulation (EC) 854/2004, Annex I, Section IV, Chapter IX, B2*). Treatment is either at a temperature not exceeding 7°C for a period not less than 21 days, or at a temperature not exceeding -10°C for a period not less than 14 days. Following treatment there is a need to verify that the appropriate treatment has taken place.

In 2005 MHS reported that *C. bovis* was found in 65 abattoirs in 565 carcasses. Some of these will have been subject to cold treatment in-house or in standalone cold stores. In the latter case (unless the meat is returned to the slaughterhouse) the Official Veterinarian (OV) would have verified the time/temperature conditions before the meat left the cold store. The transfer of enforcement responsibility for cold stores to local authorities on 1 January 2006 raised the issue of who should carry out certification of such meat at stand-alone cold store premises. The attached letter clarifies the arrangements with effect from 1 May 2008.

CHAPTER 10 DRESSING OF CARCASSES

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<p>C18. Slaughterhouse operators must follow the instructions of the competent authority to ensure that post-mortem inspection of all slaughtered animals is carried out under suitable conditions in accordance with Regulation 854/2004.</p> <p><i>853/2004 Annex III Section I Slaughter Hygiene: Chapter IV point 12</i></p>	
	<p><i>Cysticercus bovis (C. bovis)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the OV's instructions to ensure that post-mortem inspection is carried out under suitable conditions in accordance. <p>C18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat infected with <i>C. bovis</i> is to be declared unfit for human consumption. However uninfected parts of animals not generally infected, may be declared fit for human consumption after cold treatment. <p>854/2004 Annex I Section IV Chapter IX B2</p>	<p><i>When not generally infected with <i>C.bovis</i>, parts of a carcass may be declared fit for human consumption if they undergo cold treatment for a specified time at a set temperature (i.e. <u>either</u> 14 days at a temperature not exceeding -10°C <u>or</u> 21 days at a temperature not exceeding -7°C). See Part One Chapter 6.6 for more information about <i>C.bovis</i>.</i></p> <p><i>The carcass will be cut up to determine the extent of the infection. Those parts that are not infected must be boxed and placed in cold storage. The boxes will be detained and officially labelled to ensure that they are not used until the OV is satisfied that the meat has received satisfactory treatment.</i></p> <p><i>Special arrangements</i> - <i>if cold storage facilities are not available at the slaughterhouse, the meat may be sent to an approved standalone cold store for treatment by arrangement with the OV.</i></p> <p><i>The transfer permit that must accompany the meat must include the total number of boxes being consigned to the cold store and the number of carcasses that have been boxed. Each box must be labelled 'C.bovis - Detained'.</i></p> <p><i>A charge will normally be made for an Authorised Officer (AO) to visit the cold store to check the treatment and, if there is no cause for concern, to release the meat. The AO will sign and return the transfer permit to the originating plant and, once released, the boxes can be identification marked by the cold store and despatched.</i></p>