

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

NOTIFICATION OF EMERGENCY MEASURES

Revision

1.	Member to Agreement notifying: <u>UNITED STATES</u> If applicable, name of local government involved:
2.	Agency responsible: Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, APHIS
3.	Products covered (tariff item number(s) as specified in national schedules deposited with the WTO. ICS numbers may be provided in addition, where applicable): Ruminants and ruminant products
4.	Title and number of pages of the notified document: Restrictions on the Importation of Ruminants, Meat and Meat Products From Ruminants, and Certain Other Ruminant Products. (3 pages - English)
5.	Description of content: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is amending the regulations governing the importation into the United States of ruminants, meat and meat products from ruminants, and other ruminant products to restrict the importation of live ruminants, meat and meat products from ruminants, and certain other ruminant products from countries in which Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) may exist. The 6 January 1998 Federal Register notice follows an emergency action taken on 12 December 1997 which temporarily stopped the issuance of import permits for live ruminants and certain products of ruminant origin to certain European countries due to the risk of BSE. The 6 January 1998 Federal Register notice gives background on the action taken, reasons for the new restrictions and explains procedures for requesting removal of restrictions by the countries affected by this action.
6.	Objective and rationale: This action is necessary to ensure that animals and animal products affected with BSE are not imported into the United States.

- 7. Nature of the urgent problem(s):** Current policy places the United States at continued risk for introduction of BSE into the animal or human food chain and provides no incentive for high-risk nations to comply with internationally recommended surveillance and risk assessment standards for animal health. The United States has immediate animal and public health concerns about the safety of European ruminants and ruminant products and is requesting information about BSE surveillance and reporting systems in these countries.

Currently, APHIS restricts importation of live ruminants and ruminant products from nations which have reported BSE in native born cattle. This passive method relies solely on the ability of a nation's veterinary service to detect and report the disease. The APHIS Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) Working Group, the FDA TSE Advisory Committee, and the EU's Standing Veterinary Committee have recommended that the United States base import policy on active risk assessment and surveillance rather than reporting alone. Concern about the US import policy and potential impact on the health and welfare of the American consumer has been expressed by Officials of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Therefore, the United States has taken this immediate temporary emergency action.

- 8. An international standard, guideline or recommendation does not exist [].**
If an international standard, guideline or recommendation exists, whenever possible, identify deviations:

The Office International des Epizooties (OIE) International Animal Health Code, Chapter 3.2.13, Article 3.2.13.1 supports import policies based on active analysis of risk in exporting Nations.

- 9. Relevant documents and language(s) in which these are available:** 63 FR 406, 6 January 1998; 9 CFR Parts 94 and 96

- 10. Date of entry into force/period of application (as applicable):** 12 December 1997. The period of application of this action is until the risk of BSE being introduced through these sources can be assessed.

- 11. Texts available from/and agency or authority designated to handle comments:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA; **National enquiry point [X] or address, telefax number and E-mail address (if available) of other body:**

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Comments will be received until 9 March 1998.