PROPOSED LETTER TO THE VETERINARY RECORD FROM
DEALLER ET AL ON THE "YORKSHIRE CASE"

From: J W Wilesmith
17 December 1993
Epidemiology
CVL, Weybridge
2618 GTN 3956

To: Dr D Matthews - Tolworth TJ

cc: Mr K C Taylor
Mr I Robertson

1. As promised, and just in case the letter does get published in the Veterinary
Record before returning from the quinquennial holiday, the following may
be of help in replying, specifically, to the last three sentences of the
penultimate paragraph of the proposed letter.

2. As a general point, and as you know, Dealer and Lacey are unaware of the
considerable variation in the age-specific negative rate. A response to this
section of the letter could therefore be along the following lines:

"The authors of this letter are clearly unaware of the considerable variation
in the age-specific negative rate which has been observed in suspect cases of
BSE slaughtered and examined histopathologically. The authors therefore
should have taken account of this before quoting crude negative rates. More
specifically, an analysis of the suspect cases, which were born after 18 July,
and for which a histopathological diagnosis was available before 1 February
1992 compared with such animals for which a histopathological diagnosis
was available before 1 November 1993 is relevant. The results are
summarised in Table 1. (See separate page)

These results can be compared with our most recent analysis of the negative
rate in suspect cases of BSE in animals which have slaughtered and were
born before 18 July 1988. The results of this analysis are summarised in
Table 2. (See separate page)

This clearly indicates that the comparison quoted is inappropriate and
ignores the numeracy required in this epidemiological analysis. Therefore
the claim that the purported "change in reporting procedure must distort
recent epidemiological trends of the disease" is totally unfounded.

93/12.17/3.1

JWW828.MIN

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3. I have naturally edited the above to remove any caustic comments. We can only hope that the letter is the subject of scientific scrutiny as this will result in the authors being asked questions on the above aspect.

4. I would be grateful if you could let me know if you think that more is required in response to this aspect of the proposed letter. I can obviously forewarn Martin Alder at the Veterinary Record that he should contact you or Kevin in my absence should the letter be submitted; I would just tell him that I had heard a rumour.

J W WILESMITH
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE (MTHS) OF SUSPECT BSE CASES AT ONSET OF CLINICAL SIGNS</th>
<th>SUSPECT CASES OF BSE BORN AFTER 18 JULY 1988 FOR WHICH THE HISTOPATHOLOGICAL DIAGNOSIS WAS AVAILABLE:</th>
<th></th>
<th>BEFORE 1 FEBRUARY 1992</th>
<th></th>
<th>BEFORE 1 NOVEMBER 1993</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No SLAUGHTERED</td>
<td>No NEGATIVE</td>
<td>% NEGATIVE</td>
<td>No SLAUGHTERED</td>
<td>No NEGATIVE</td>
<td>% NEGATIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>24-35</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>92.53</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>89.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>36-47</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>81.08</td>
<td>2289</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>29.75</td>
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<td>48-59</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3505</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>10.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-71</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>92.22</td>
<td>6332</td>
<td>1549</td>
<td>24.46</td>
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**TABLE 1**
### TABLE 2

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<th>N</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>317</th>
<th>6524</th>
<th>27395</th>
<th>25810</th>
<th>10250</th>
<th>1231</th>
<th>3248</th>
<th>558</th>
<th>2220</th>
<th>125</th>
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<tr>
<td>%NEGATIVE ON EXAMINATION</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>22.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGES (MTHS) OF SUSPECT BS CASES AT THE ONSET OF CLINICAL SIGNS WHICH WERE BORN BEFORE 18 JULY 1988</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>48-59</td>
<td>60-71</td>
<td>72-83</td>
<td>84-95</td>
<td>96-107</td>
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<td>120-131</td>
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