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IN CONFIDENCE

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SECOND CASE OF CJD IN DAIRY-FARMER

DH were informed last week by Dr Will of the CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh of a case of CJD (confirmed by brain biopsy) in a 64 year old dairy farmer, who is presently hospitalised near his home in the West Country. The farmer is thought to have had at least two cases of BSE in his herd, which were diagnosed in 1992. The farmer is reported to have assisted in calving and to have drunk the milk from his herd. The history does not suggest that this is anything other than a sporadic case of CJD.

There are similarities between this case, and the confirmed case of CJD in a dairy farmer reported earlier this year (see attached case report from The Lancet). This previous case attracted a good deal of media attention, and this current case is likely to do the same, especially as his family are known to be concerned. MAFF are aware of the situation and are briefing their ministers.

We are taking expert advice with respect to this further case, and we will keep you informed. At the moment, the existence of this case is confidential. We therefore suggest the following line to take in case of enquiries:

"DH is aware of a second case of CJD in a dairy farmer who has had BSE in his herd. We cannot comment on the details of the case, but we know of nothing to suggest this is anything other than a sporadic case of CJD. The Department continues to monitor the incidence of CJD in humans."

93/7.12/1.1

- 2 -

If pressed:

The numbers concerned are very small, and it is not possible to draw any conclusions from such small numbers. This issue is being considered by the Government's expert advisers.

More detailed Q & A briefing will be provided as soon as we have more information.



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