

IN CONFIDENCE

Reference

BSE

You asked for a paragraph that you might insert into Mr Ryder's briefing for his meeting with PFMA based on our discussions with this week. I hope the following covers the important points.

"Officials have recently had a very useful exploratory meeting with [redacted]. The company is sufficiently concerned about BSE to employ a consultant to advise them on the risk to pet animals through consumption of materials containing slaughterhouse meat and offal. It should be noted that under experimental conditions cats succumb to an encephalopathy after intracerebral inoculation of material derived from patients affected with Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. The consultant is doing a very thorough job and is attempting to classify the relative risk from a variety of materials and to assess how these risks are reduced by canning and other forms of heat treatment. Since none of the treatments will destroy all the agent in the raw material pet animals will be exposed through feed although it does appear that the load of the agent in the final food would be fairly low. The company will be taking steps to reduce this load even further when the risk assessment exercise is completed. In the meantime we have been asked to maintain confidentiality on the work that [redacted] are doing."

KC
K C Meldrum
18 May 1989

Mr J D Garnett

cc Mrs E A J Attridge
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Dr W A Watson
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