



INDUSTRY NEWS FLASH

95

CJD is a human health issue. BSE is a disease which affects cattle. There is no link between CJD and BSE.

The Meat and Livestock Commission is not qualified to speak authoritatively about CJD and is referring queries to the Department of Health.

MLC is keeping a close liaison with senior officials at both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

It should be noted that the Department of Health has told MLC that on the current CJD issue:

- The Department of Health is satisfied that human health is being properly protected. The Department's primary role is to protect human health.
- The Government is receiving expert scientific advice from the respected and learned Tyrell Committee.
- A specialist BSE/CJD surveillance unit in Edinburgh is carrying out exhaustive investigations and reporting regularly to the Government.
- The Department of Health is satisfied there is no link between BSE and CJD.

It should also be noted that:

1. No doctor has confirmed that the 16 year-old teenager publicised in newspapers this week has CJD. Final confirmation that a human being has CJD can only be provided through a post mortem. It is extremely difficult to identify positively CJD in a living person.
2. Top scientists throughout Great Britain and the EC have investigated extensively CJD and BSE. Their conclusions are that there is absolutely no evidence of a link between CJD and BSE.
3. The unscientific suggestion of a link between eating hamburgers and CJD has only been made by the girl's family who, quite understandably, are very distressed by their daughter's illness.
4. CJD was discovered in 1928, and as technology has advanced more cases have come to light.
5. CJD has been found in lifelong vegetarians.

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6. Although it normally occurs in elderly people, CJD has been found in young people - in the US, for example, where BSE does not exist.
7. CJD has been recorded in many other countries around the world where there is no BSE or similar animal health diseases.

If you are approached by the media on this topic, we invite you to refer the caller to the MLC Press Office. This will help to ensure uniformity in the industry's message.