



Where can I find out more?

For more in-depth information on how BSE is being controlled in this country, see the Food Standards Agency's leaflet BSE and Beef/ New Controls Explained

More on BSE can be found on the Food Standards Agency's website at:
www.food.gov.uk/bse

For further copies of this leaflet, contact Food Standards Agency Publications,
tel: 0845 606 0667;
email: foodstandards@ecgroup.uk.com

For more on the Food Standards Agency, go to: www.food.gov.uk or www.eatwell.gov.uk

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BSE and Beef
A Brief Guide to New Controls

BSE in cattle, which is sometimes known as 'mad cow disease', is now at its lowest levels in the UK since recording began in 1988. This is due to the success of measures introduced by the Government to control the disease and make beef safer for people to eat.

The main control means that when cattle are prepared for food, the parts of the cow most likely to contain BSE are removed and do not go into our food. This removes almost all of the risk (over 99%) that could be present if a cow has BSE.

Another control makes it illegal for cattle to be fed material that might spread BSE. This has meant that there are now very few cows that could be infected.

A third control has banned cattle aged over 30 months from going into our food, as BSE does not develop fully in cattle until they are much older. Because of the steep decline in the disease, this control is being replaced by a testing system. This means that no cattle aged over 30 months will be allowed into the food chain unless they have tested negative for BSE.



The Food Standards Agency considers that the BSE controls provide a very high level of public protection and that the risk of BSE infectivity entering the food chain will continue to be extremely low.

The Food Standards Agency reviewed the BSE controls over two years using expert independent scientific advice. The Government has accepted advice from the FSA that BSE testing will provide acceptable levels of consumer protection because of:

- The continuing decline of BSE
- The effectiveness of control measures
- The reliability of the BSE Testing System for older cattle
- Safeguards to monitor and enforce all of the controls

Who is this leaflet from?

This leaflet is published by the Food Standards Agency.

The Food Standards Agency is a UK-wide, independent Government agency that provides advice and information to the public and Government on food safety, nutrition and diet.

The Agency was created to protect the interests of consumers. Its guiding principles are to:

- Put the consumer first
- Be open and accessible
- Be an independent voice