

Texas Health Commission Advisory on FDA Feedlot Investigation (January 29, 2001)

During the past 48 hours, the media has focused on a situation in Texas regarding a possible feed contamination issue. We are taking this opportunity to advise you of the facts surrounding this situation, in order to avert undue concern:

According to reports from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), about a week ago, some cattle in a Texas feedlot may have consumed some feed that contained mammalian protein (meat and bone meal). Since 1997, the FDA has banned mammalian protein in feed for ruminants (multi-stomached animals), such as cattle. The error was noted within hours and was reported by the feed manufacturer to the FDA. The use of the lot of feed in question was suspended and the feedlot is voluntarily holding the cattle on site. The FDA is analyzing samples of the feed. The feed analysis should be complete by Monday evening, January 29, 2001, at which time, the FDA will evaluate the next step regarding these animals. FDA officials expect to make a decision regarding the animals by Jan. 31.

Some salient points:

- This is not a disease situation.
- The FDA is determining if mammalian protein is contained in this feed. (The meat and bone meal, if present, was derived from US-origin animals.)
- This situation is NOT a disease issue. It is a possible contaminated, or adulterated, feed occurrence and is under the jurisdiction of the FDA.
- The US does not have BSE, and the ban on feeding mammalian protein to ruminants is a preemptive precaution.
- The FDA has not released the name of the feed company or the feedlot and its location.

Please refer interested parties to Mr. Lawrence Bachorik, at the Food and Drug Administration, which is in charge of this situation. Mr. Bachorik's number is 1-301-827-6250. Carla Everett, public info officer at the TAHC, can be reached at 1-800-550-8242, ext 710."

FDA officials have advised that if their tests confirm that the feed does contain mammalian protein, the feed and the cattle that may have eaten the feed will be considered "adulterated". In that case, the cattle can not be used for human food.