



**STATEMENT FROM THE  
CANADIAN CATTLE IDENTIFICATION AGENCY (CCIA)  
REGARDING BSE DISEASE INVESTIGATION IN ALBERTA**

May 20, 2003

Canada's cattle herd is considered one of the healthiest in the world, and the Canadian animal health standards are among the highest. The Canadian Cattle Identification program was put in place under the Health of Animals Act to improve the traceability of our national cattle herd. This program does not prevent disease, but rather improves the turn around time and efficiency of all trace backs, trace forwards and trace through.

The Canadian Cattle Identification Program has been in place since 2001, with final implementation as of July 1, 2002. This mandatory program involves the individual identification of all cattle that move beyond their herds of origin with approved ear tags bearing numbers that are unique to each animal. This number is maintained up to the point of carcass inspection at the packing plant. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is reporting exceptionally high producer compliance levels across the country and have demonstrated that the system is working by completing over 100 successful animal health and food safety tracebacks using the CCIA unique ID number and traceback system.

Regarding the BSE investigation in Alberta, all calves that have left the herd in question have been identified with an official CCIA tag and the cattle ID program is proving invaluable with this trace out situation. The cow in question was born long before the Canadian Cattle Identification program was implemented, however, Alberta does have a brand inspection program which will be used to assist with this investigation.

The CCIA will work with the CFIA and the CCA to provide timely information that will reassure our domestic and international customers of the superior health status of our Canadian cattle herd.

For more information on the Canadian Cattle Identification Program please contact:

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