

questions

What is Canada's BSE surveillance testing program?

Our increased surveillance testing program is used to monitor the health of Canadian cattle, measuring the prevalence of BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) in the cattle population. This testing program, conducted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, seeks out and tests cattle most at risk of BSE.

Will there be more cases of BSE?

Increased testing will likely find additional cases of BSE. However, this does not compromise the safety of Canadian beef. The tissues that may contain the BSE agent and can transmit the disease (known as Specified Risk Material or SRM) must be removed and are not allowed into the human food chain. **This is the best way to protect consumers from BSE.**



Why aren't all cattle tested for BSE?

Canada's meat inspection system ensures beef's safety and the removal of SRM during meat processing is the best way to protect consumers from BSE. Testing healthy or young animals would not improve consumer food safety. Therefore, there is no benefit to testing all cattle.

Will Canada have a widespread outbreak of BSE in cattle as Europe did?

In the summer of 2003, a team of scientists from around the world and internationally recognized as experts in BSE, reviewed Canada's BSE policies and procedures. This panel concluded that a widespread outbreak of BSE in Canada is very unlikely because of the BSE safeguards that were put in place over the past 15 years.

For the most up-to-date information about BSE in Canada and links to related Government of Canada websites, visit www.BSEinfo.ca

Federal and provincial governments and the beef industry are working together to monitor and eliminate BSE.



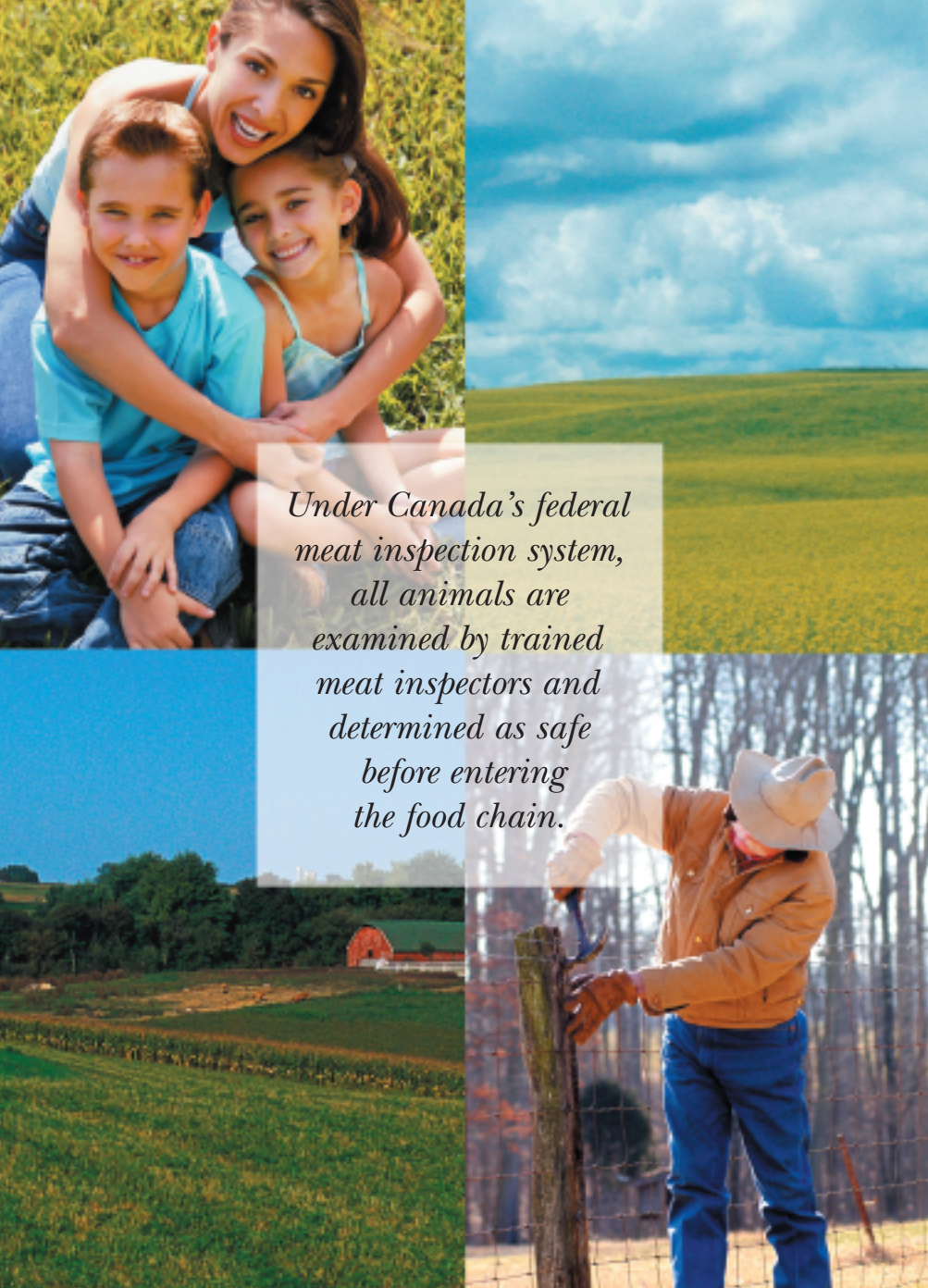
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Under Canada's federal meat inspection system, all animals are examined by trained meat inspectors and determined as safe before entering the food chain.

Canada is considered a minimal risk country for "mad cow disease" or BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy).

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has developed criteria that qualifies a country as having minimal risk for BSE. Countries that meet these criteria are at minimal risk, meaning that the prevalence of the disease is very low.*

Aggressive steps have been taken to modify Canada's already strong food safety system for public health protection. Safeguards have been strengthened to monitor and protect our cattle herds from BSE.

Steps taken

Canada has put in place the recommendations made by an international panel of BSE experts. Such actions include:

- Increased BSE testing. More than 23,000 higher-risk animals tested in 2004 with a target of 30,000 in 2005.
- Tissues that may contain the BSE agent and can transmit the disease (known as Specified Risk Material or SRM) must be removed from ALL cattle and do not enter the human food chain.
- Feed ban regulations are being extended to include the removal of SRM from all animal feeds.

Visit www.BSEinfo.ca for the most up-to-date information about BSE in Canada and for links to related Government of Canada and international websites. To receive a detailed information package on BSE by mail, call 1-888-248-BEEF to order.

*OIE: Office international des épizooties

BSE safeguards

Canada has continued to increase safeguards to ensure the health of Canadians. Our program commitments have evolved to include:

- A ban on the import of cattle, beef and beef products from the UK and Republic of Ireland (1990). Import restrictions have expanded and are under continuous review.
- The declaration of BSE as a reportable disease (1990). This requires that all cattle demonstrating signs of BSE are to be tested.
- Operation of a national surveillance testing program targeting cattle at potentially higher risk for BSE (1992).
- A ban on feeding ruminant meat and bone meal to cattle (1997).
- A mandatory traceback system allows cattle to be traced back to farm of origin (2001). The system was initiated by beef producers, and is enforced by Canada's Food Inspection Agency.

and most importantly...

In Canada, SRM – those tissues that may contain the BSE agent and can transmit the disease – must be removed from ALL cattle entering the human food supply.

This measure is internationally recognized as the best way to protect consumers from BSE.