To: Operators of full throughput red meat slaughterhouses in England

14 December 1998

Dear Sir/Madam

**EXPORT OF BEEF FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM: DATE-BASED EXPORT SCHEME**

1. On 25 November the European Commission adopted a Decision which amends Council Decision 98/256/EC to allow for exports of beef from the United Kingdom under the Date-Based Export Scheme (DBES). Enclosed at Annex A is a copy of the Commission Decision.

2. I am writing to give you some information about the DBES and to ask whether you would be interested in operating as a DBES approved Slaughterhouse.

**Aim of the Scheme**

3. The aim of the Date-based Export Scheme is to permit exports of deboned beef, and beef products, derived from cattle born after 1 August 1996.

4. Details of the eligibility criteria for DBES animals, the products which may be exported and the main requirements applying to DBES slaughterhouses are at Annex B to this letter.

**General principles**

5. The purpose of the scheme is to facilitate exports and not to set a general standard for the UK market. It is inevitable that some beef from eligible animals will end up on the domestic market, but the main aim is to make sure that supplies under the scheme can meet export demand. A sharp focus on exports will also help to keep down costs and hence charges to exporters.
Outline of scheme

6. We now propose that the scheme should operate in the following way:

(a) DBES approved slaughterhouses would collect details of animals on farms;
(b) they would submit applications for these animals to a central DBES unit in MAFF;
(c) this unit would check which animals were eligible for export and notify the slaughterhouse;
(d) when the animals were brought to the slaughterhouse, the Meat Hygiene Service would confirm that the animals had been checked and were still eligible;
(e) the slaughterhouse would have to be dedicated to animals eligible for export (i.e. it could not slaughter any cattle that were ineligible);
(f) after slaughter, DBES meat would have to be cut and processed in plants dedicated to products eligible for export.

A description of the proposed procedures for the pre-slaughterhouse operation of the scheme is at Annex C.

Eligibility of animals

7. The eligibility conditions, both for animals and for slaughterhouses and other premises, are set out in the Commission Decision and must be taken as given. Comments are not being sought on them. Compliance is not a straightforward matter. However, departments believe that if the details of an animal are submitted it should be possible to check whether it is eligible in the following way:

- the animal is not the offspring of a BSE case or suspect: check against the MAFF/DANI BSE databases;
- the animal is aged between 6 and 30 months: check against the cattle passports/cattle tracing databases;
- the dam was alive six months after the birth of the animal: three possibilities:-
  (a) search of official computer databases (cattle passports/cattle tracing; over thirty months scheme; suckler cow premium);
  (b) if requested, search of official manual records (e.g. tuberculin test);
  (c) at owner’s initiative, provision of a certificate from a veterinarian confirming that the animal is alive on a certain date.

8. From a preliminary trial, departments believe that for animals approaching slaughter age it should be possible to confirm the survival of the dam in about
50% of cases through the search of official computer databases (mainly because by then the dam will have had another calf and will be recorded on its passport). This would appear to give an ample supply of animals to meet export demand. It is not clear whether individual owners would be anxious to establish eligibility for animals which cannot be confirmed by this first test.

**Eligibility of slaughterhouses, cutting and processing plants**

9. Slaughterhouses and other plants which wished to be approved under the DBES would have to apply to the Agriculture Departments, which would arrange inspections to ensure that the plant was dedicated to animals, meat or meat products eligible for export and that the necessary veterinary supervision could be provided. Plants would be subject to the controls currently applying to XAP premises, but - unlike XAP plants at present - they would not be permitted to process export eligible products at different times from non-eligible products (although this may appear inconsistent, it has to be accepted as part of the EU rules).

**Charging**

10. The Government intends to meet the start-up costs of the DBES, but to make charges to cover its running costs. It is proposed that the charges should take the form of a charge per animal for every application submitted to the DBES unit for checking that it is eligible for export (whether or not it is confirmed as eligible) and a charge per plant for the approval of slaughterhouses and other plants as dedicated under the DBES. Slaughterhouses would also be charged for the extra MHS staff presence required and for approval and audit inspections.

11. The charges will depend on the actual costs of running the scheme. Our first rough estimates are that the charge per animal could be of the order of £1.50 - £2.00 per animal. An estimate of the additional costs for a slaughterhouse with a throughput of 350 cattle per week is as follows:

**Recurring costs:-**

- Meat Hygiene Service Staff £ 17,000
- Veterinary Field Staff audit inspections £ 800

**Non- recurring costs:-**

- Cost of initial inspection £ 390
- Suitable IT hardware £ 3,200

These estimates will however be revised in the light of experience.
Timescale

12. The Commission Decision does not fix the date from which exports under the DBES may start; instead, Article 6.5 of Council Decision 98/256/EC (as amended) specifies that the European Commission shall fix such a date after inspecting and reporting on our application of all the provisions of the Decision. One of the most important provisions is that we should first kill and incinerate all identified offspring of BSE cases which were born after 1 August 1996 to BSE cases confirmed before 25 November 1998. This is likely to take some time, but we have been operating the cull on a voluntary basis since August 1998. We expect to lay regulations very soon to make the cull compulsory and hope that it will be possible to set a date for exports to resume in spring 1999.

13. In the meantime we propose to prepare for the resumption of exports in two ways. We shall make the legislation to give us legal powers to approve plants and to check animals for eligibility as soon as possible after the consultation period.

14. We shall also prepare more detailed guidance on the operation of the Scheme. We plan to issue a booklet describing the procedures and answering basic questions. Are there particular issues which need to be covered in the planned guidance?

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15. If you are interested in operating under the DBES and would like to have more information about the Scheme as it becomes available, then please write to me at the above address. I would also welcome any comments you may have on the operation of the Scheme.

Yours faithfully

Stan Sadowski

AH(BSE&IT) Beef Export Task Force
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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 25-11-1998
C(1998) 3773 final

COMMISSION DECISION 25-11-1998
amending Decision 98/255/EC as regards certain emergency measures to protect against bovine spongiform encephalopathy

C(1998) 3773 final
COMMISSION DECISION 25 -11- 1998
amending Decision 98/256/EC as regards certain emergency measures to protect against bovine spongiform encephalopathy

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE COMMISSION OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Directive 89/662/EEC of 11 December 1989 concerning veterinary checks in intra-Community trade with a view to the completion of the internal market, as last amended by Directive 92/118/EEC, and in particular Article 9(4) thereof,

(1) Whereas Council Decision 98/256/EC of 16 March 1998 concerning emergency measures to protect against bovine spongiform encephalopathy, amending Decision 94/474/EC and repealing Decision 96/239/EC, as amended by Commission Decision 98/564/EC, provided for a step-by-step approach to the lifting of the ban on the dispatch to other Member States and third countries of products from bovine animals slaughtered in the United Kingdom; whereas the first step was the lifting of the prohibitions on the dispatch of products from bovine animals slaughtered, cut, processed and stored in establishments exclusively used for products destined for dispatch to other Member States and third countries, and located in Northern Ireland; whereas subsequent steps will include the lifting of the prohibition on the processing of eligible meat from Northern Ireland in Great Britain, under conditions which will be laid down at a later stage; whereas the Commission will immediately start investigating, with the authorities of the United Kingdom, by what means and under what conditions those restrictions may be further relaxed;

(2) Whereas the date on which the dispatch of products under the Export Certified Herds Scheme (ECHS) could commence was set at 1 June 1998 by Commission Decision 98/351/EC;

(3) Whereas the United Kingdom put forward a first proposal for a Date-Based Export Scheme (DBES) with a view to permitting, subject to certain conditions, the dispatch of products from animals born after a certain date to the Commission on 2 October 1997; whereas the Scientific Steering Committee concluded at its meetings of 8 and 9 December 1997 and 22 and 23 January 1998 that that proposal was not adequate; whereas the United Kingdom put forward a modified proposal dated 27 January 1998; whereas the Scientific Steering Committee issued an opinion on that

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revised proposal on 20 February 1998 stating that the revised proposal responded to
the suggestions and questions formulated by the Scientific Steering Committee;

(4) Whereas the feeding of ruminant protein to ruminants has been illegal in the
United Kingdom since January 1989; whereas a total ban on the feeding of
mammalian meat-and-bone meal was introduced in 1994; whereas the feeding of any
mammalian meat-and-bone meal to all farmed livestock was banned on 4 April 1996;
whereas by 1 August 1996 all feed containing mammalian meat-and-bone meal in the
United Kingdom had been recalled and premises in which it had been stored were
required to be cleansed and disinfected; whereas from that date it became a legal
offence to sell or supply any mammalian meat-and-bone meal for incorporation into
livestock feed or to feed livestock any feed containing mammalian meat-and-bone
meal or to possess mammalian meat-and-bone meal wherever farm feed was stored or
prepared; whereas the monitoring programme, in existence since 1 February 1996, to
check that no mammalian meat-and-bone meal was being incorporated in livestock
feed after 1 August 1996 has been extended; whereas the results of that programme
demonstrated adequate compliance with the prohibition on incorporating mammalian
meat-and-bone meal or protein in ruminant feedstuffs from 1 August 1996;
whereas therefore, adequate guarantees have been given that cattle born after
1 August 1996 have not been exposed to a risk of infection in feed;

(5) Whereas a mission of the Veterinary and Phytosanitary Inspection and Control Office
of the Commission to the United Kingdom from 22 to 26 July 1996 assessing the
effectiveness of the feed ban and the feed recall scheme confirmed that adequate
guarantees on compliance were given;

(6) Whereas the United Kingdom is required to ensure that all offspring born after
1 August 1996 of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) cases are slaughtered and
destroyed with a view to subsequent incineration before dispatch under the DBES can
commence, whereas the United Kingdom is also required to ensure that the dams of
eligible animals have not contracted BSE at the time of slaughter of the eligible
animal and have been alive for six months after the birth of the eligible animal;
whereas those measures adequately address the risk of maternal transmission of BSE
to an eligible animal;

(7) Whereas the United Kingdom has introduced a bovine passport system in
Great Britain for bovine animals born on or after 1 July 1996; whereas that system
allows accurate verification of the identity of eligible animals, their date of birth and
their dam; whereas the veterinary inspection services of the Commission assessed the
effective implementation of that passport system during a mission from 30 September
to 4 October 1996; whereas the United Kingdom intends to introduce a system of
official controls and evidence provided by farmers to verify the survival of dams for
six months;

(8) Whereas this Decision should lay down a system of special approval of meat plants
participating in the DBES; whereas an establishment approved under the DBES
should not be allowed to slaughter bovine animals and process and handle meat
ineligible for dispatch to the other Member States or third countries under the rules
concerning the DBES, the ECHS and the redispacht of meat from animals slaughtered
outside the United Kingdom; whereas cold-stores approved under the DBES should store meat eligible for dispatch in dedicated chambers;

(9) Whereas the strict control provisions, including the additional health mark laid down in Decision 98/256/EC for the processing and dispatch of imported meat and for the ECHS should also apply to meat and meat products eligible under the DBES;

(10) Whereas the United Kingdom has guaranteed that at least one official veterinarian will be permanently present in slaughterhouses approved under the DBES throughout ante-mortem and post-mortem examinations; whereas the United Kingdom has undertaken to ensure the daily presence of an official veterinarian in cutting-plants approved under the DBES;

(11) Whereas the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission conducted a mission to the United Kingdom from 20 to 24 July to assess the DBES; whereas the mission report recommended that the United Kingdom clarify the method of verification of the survival of the dam for six months, and the information becoming available after slaughter which would render the meat and products thereof ineligible; whereas the United Kingdom has agreed to further improvements to comply with those recommendations; whereas it was also recommended that the conditions of the proposal be clarified with respect to the offspring cull in order to take into account both the intention of the UK to directly incinerate the animals and the foreseeable fact that not all offspring (100%) will be traceable; whereas minor amendments have been made to the proposal to comply with those recommendations;

(12) Whereas the measures for implementation of the DBES and the offspring cull will be examined by a mission of the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission before the dispatch of meat and meat products may commence; whereas if that examination is satisfactory the Commission will set the date on which dispatch may commence;

(13) Whereas animals presented for slaughter under the ECHS or the DBES must meet all of the relevant conditions laid down in this Decision; whereas, if it is discovered after slaughter of an animal under one of those schemes that it should have been considered ineligible, the competent authority must take the necessary measures to prevent the dispatch of products from that animal; whereas if any product from an animal subsequently found to be ineligible has been dispatched, the measures laid down in Article 9 of Directive 89/662/EEC must be applied;

(14) Whereas it is therefore appropriate to lay down the rules for the DBES as a step to lifting the prohibition on the dispatch of fresh deboned meat and certain products made from that fresh deboned meat, from bovine animals slaughtered in the United Kingdom;

(15) Whereas a revision of the Animal Health Code of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) on BSE (OIE Code on BSE) was adopted in the general assembly of the OIE in Paris on 29 May 1998; whereas Article 3.2.13.9. of that Code recommends conditions for the import of deboned meat and meat products from cattle from a country or zone with a high incidence of BSE; whereas the conditions laid down in this Decision are in conformity with that Article of the OIE Code on BSE;
(16) Whereas Article 3.2.13.9. of the OIE Code on BSE requires Veterinary Administrations, when goods are imported from a country or zone with a high incidence of BSE, to require the presentation of an international certificate attesting that the conditions of that Article are complied with; whereas adequate guarantees should be provided on re-entry into the Community of meat originating from bovine animals slaughtered in the United Kingdom that when the corresponding consignments were exported, the Community requirements were met; whereas, therefore, the certificate referred to in Article 3.2.13.9. of the OIE Code on BSE should accompany the consignment on exportation;

(17) Whereas, in view of the low level of risk, it is appropriate to authorise, subject to certain conditions, the dispatch of food for domestic carnivores;

(18) Whereas the scope of the provisions relating to cold store chambers, to the separation requirements for eligible animals and products during slaughter, cutting, processing and cold storage, and to identification of serial numbers should be clarified;

(19) Whereas Decision 98/256/EC should therefore be amended accordingly;

(20) Whereas the Standing Veterinary Committee has not given a favourable opinion; whereas the Commission has therefore proposed these measures to the Council on 13 November 1998 in accordance with Article 17 of Directive 89/662/EEC, the Council being required to act within 15 days;

(21) Whereas, however, the Council has not acted within the required time limit; whereas the Council has not decided against the proposed measures by simple majority within the same time limit; whereas these measures should now be adopted by the Commission,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Decision 98/256/EC is amended as follows:

(1) Article 6 is replaced by the following:

"Article 6

1. By way of derogation from Article 3, the United Kingdom may authorise the dispatch to other Member States or to third countries of the following products derived from bovine animals born and reared in the United Kingdom which have been slaughtered in the United Kingdom in slaughterhouses which are not used for the slaughter of any ineligible bovine animal, in accordance with the conditions laid down in this Article, Article 7, Articles 9 to 12 and Annex II or, as appropriate, Annex III:

(a) ‘fresh meat’ as defined by Directive 64/433/EEC;"
(b) 'minced meat' and 'meat preparations' as defined by Council Directive 94/65/EC;

(c) 'meat products' as defined by Council Directive 77/99/EEC'';

(d) food which is destined for domestic carnivores.
2. The fresh meat referred to in paragraph 1(a) shall be deboned and all adherent tissues, including obvious nervous and lymphatic tissues, shall be removed in cutting plants in the United Kingdom which are not used for cutting any ineligible bovine products. Cold storage shall take place in the United Kingdom in chambers which are not used for storing any ineligible bovine products and are kept locked under the seal of the competent authority when the latter is not present. Cutting, storage and transport shall be carried out in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 7, Articles 9 to 12 and Annex II or, as appropriate, Annex III.

3. The fresh meat referred to in paragraph 1(a) may be used for the production of products referred to in paragraph 1(b), (c) and (d) in establishments in the United Kingdom which are not used for the production of any ineligible bovine products, in accordance with the conditions laid down in this Article, in Article 7, Articles 9 to 12 and Annex II or, as appropriate, Annex III.

4. For the purposes of this Article, eligible products means products referred to in paragraph 1 and products derived from bovine animals not slaughtered in the United Kingdom which comply with the conditions laid down in Article 9 to 13.

5. The Commission, after having verified the application of all the provisions of this Decision on the basis of Community inspections and after having informed the Member States, shall set the date on which dispatch of the products referred to in Annex III may commence.

6. The Commission shall review the provisions of this Article at least every three months and shall take appropriate measures in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 17 of Directive 89/662/EEC.

7. For the purpose of this Decision “chamber” shall mean a room or any other structure within a room which provides a secure lockable physical barrier.

(i) In the second subparagraph the words "their serial numbers in the consignment" are replaced by the words "the relevant numbers in the consignment ensuring traceability of each individual unit";

(ii) In the third subparagraph the words "their serial numbers in the consignment" are replaced by the words "the relevant numbers in the consignment ensuring traceability of each individual unit";

(iii) The following subparagraph is added:

"Where those products are dispatched to third countries, they shall be accompanied by a health certificate, issued by an official veterinarian, stating that the conditions laid down in Decision 98/256/EC have been complied with".

(3) Annex II is replaced by the text in Annex I to this Decision.

(4) Annex III, as set out in Annex II to this Decision, is added.

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 25-11-1998 For the Commission

Franz Fischler

Member of the Commission

CERTIFIED COPY

The Secretary General,

Carlo TROJAN
ANNEX II

EXPORT CERTIFIED HERDS SCHEME (ECHS)

1. Deboned fresh meat and products referred to in Article 6(1)(b), (c) and (d) from that meat derived from bovine animals slaughtered in Northern Ireland may be dispatched from the United Kingdom in application of the provisions of Article 6 when obtained from ECHS-eligible animals which originate from ECHS-eligible herds.

ECHS-eligible herds

2. A herd is a group of animals forming a separate and distinct unit, that is a group of animals which were managed, housed and kept separately from any other group of animals and which were identified with unique herd and animal identification numbers.

3. A herd is ECHS-eligible when for at least eight years, there has been no confirmed case of BSE, nor a suspect case for which the diagnosis of BSE has not been ruled out, in any animal which was still in or had moved through or from the herd.

4. A herd that has been in existence for less than eight years may be considered ECHS-eligible, after a thorough epidemiological investigation by the competent veterinary authority, on condition that:

   (a) all animals born or moved into the newly established herd complied with the conditions set out in point 6(a), (c), (d) and (e); and,

   (b) the herd has complied with the conditions set out in point 3 during its entire existence.

5. If a herd is newly established on a holding which experienced a confirmed case of BSE in any animal which was still in or had moved through or from a herd on that holding, the newly established herd can only be ECHS-eligible after a thorough epidemiological investigation by the competent veterinary authority, taking into account compliance with each of the following conditions to the satisfaction of the competent veterinary authority:

   (a) all animals of the affected herd previously established on the same holding have been removed or killed;

   (b) all feed has been removed and destroyed and all feed containers thoroughly cleansed.

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(c) all buildings have been emptied and thoroughly cleansed before the new animals were admitted;

(d) all conditions set out in point 4 have been complied with.

**ECHS-eligible animals**

6. A bovine animal is ECHS-eligible if it has been born and reared in Northern Ireland and at the time of slaughter:

(a) the animal has been clearly identifiable throughout its life, enabling it to be traced back to the herd and dam of origin; all records of its birth, identity and movements are recorded on an official computerised tracing system;

(b) it is more than six months but less than 30 months of age, determined by reference to an official computer record of its date of birth;

(c) its dam has lived for at least six months after its birth;

(d) its dam has not developed BSE and is not suspected of having contracted BSE;

(e) the herd of birth of the animal and all herds through which it has ever moved are ECHS-eligible.

7. The official computerised tracing system referred to in point 6(a) will be accepted only where it has been in operation for sufficient time to contain all the information relating to the lifetime and movements of the animals needed to check compliance with the requirements of this Decision, and only in respect of animals born after the system came into operation. Historical data loaded into a computer for any period before the system was operational will not be accepted for this purpose.

**Controls**

8. If any animal presented for slaughter or any circumstance surrounding its slaughter does not meet all of the requirements of this Decision, the animal must be automatically rejected. If that information becomes available after slaughter, the competent authority must immediately cease issuing certificates, and cancel issued certificates. If dispatch has already taken place, the competent authority must notify the competent authority of the place of destination. The competent authority of the place of destination must take the appropriate measures.

9. Slaughter of ECHS-eligible animals must take place in slaughterhouses, in Northern Ireland, which are not used for slaughter of any bovine animal which is not eligible under the Date-based Export Scheme (DBES) or under the ECHS.
10. The competent authority must ensure that procedures used in the cutting plants ensure that the following lymph nodes have been removed:

Popliteal, ischiatic, superficial inguinal, deep inguinal, medial and lateral iliac, renal prefemoral, lumbar, costocervical, sternal, prescapular, axillar and caudal deep cervical.

11. Meat must be traceable back to the herd of the ECHS-eligible animal, or after cutting, to the animals cut in the same batch, by means of the computerised tracing system until the time of slaughter. After slaughter, labels must be capable of tracing fresh meat and products referred to in Article 6(1)(b) and (c) back to the herd so that the consignment concerned can be recalled. Food for domestic carnivores must be traceable by means of accompanying documents and records.

12. All approved ECHS-eligible carcasses must have individual numbers correlated with the ear tag number.

13. The United Kingdom must have detailed protocols in place covering:

(a) tracing and controls prior to slaughter;

(b) controls during slaughter;

(c) controls during processing of food for domestic carnivores;

(d) all labelling and certification requirements after slaughter to the point of sale.

14. The competent authority must set up a system for recording checks on compliance so that control can be demonstrated.

The establishment

15. To obtain approval, the establishment must, in addition to all other requirements of this Decision, devise and implement a system whereby the ECHS-eligible meat and/or ECHS-eligible product is identifiable and all meat can be traced back to its herds of origin, or after cutting, to the animals cut in the same batch. The system must facilitate full traceability of the meat or products at all stages and records must be retained for at least two years. Details of the system to be employed must be given, in writing, by the management of the establishment to the competent authority.

16. The competent authority must assess, approve and monitor the system provided by the establishment in order to ensure that it provides full segregation and traceability both backwards and forwards."
ANNEX II

"ANNEX III

DATE-BASED EXPORT SCHEME (DBES)

1. Deboned fresh meat and products referred to in Article 6(1)(b), (c) and (d) from that meat derived from bovine animals slaughtered in the United Kingdom may be dispatched from the United Kingdom in application of the provisions of Article 6 when obtained from DBES-eligible animals born after 1 August 1996.

2. Before dispatch pursuant to point 1 may commence, the United Kingdom must have implemented and effectively enforced a programme for the killing and incineration of all offspring born after 1 August 1996 of dams in which BSE has been confirmed before 25 November 1998, and must have killed and incinerated all cattle found alive which were identified under this programme.

Should confirmation take place after 25 November 1998, offspring born after 1 August 1996 of dams in which BSE has been confirmed, must be identified, slaughtered and incinerated without delay.

DBES-eligible animals

3. A bovine animal is DBES-eligible if it has been born and reared in the United Kingdom and at the time of slaughter the following conditions are shown to have been met:

(a) the animal has been clearly identifiable throughout its life, enabling it to be traced back to the dam and herd of origin; its unique ear tag number, date and holding of birth and all movements after birth are recorded either in the animal's official passport or on an official computerised identification and tracing system; the identity of its dam is known;

(b) the animal is more than six months but less than 30 months of age, determined by reference to an official computer record of its date of birth, and in the case of animals from Great Britain, the animal's official passport;

(c) the competent authority has obtained and verified positive official evidence that the dam of the animal has lived for at least six months after the birth of the eligible animal;

(d) the dam of the animal has not developed BSE and is not suspected of having contracted BSE.
Controls

4. If any animal presented for slaughter or any circumstance surrounding its slaughter does not meet all of the requirements of this Decision, the animal must be automatically rejected. If that information becomes available after slaughter, the competent authority must immediately cease issuing certificates, and cancel issued certificates. If dispatch has already taken place, the competent authority must notify the competent authority of the place of destination. The competent authority of the place of destination must take the appropriate measures.

5. Slaughter of DBES-eligible animals must take place in slaughterhouses which are not used for slaughter of any bovine animal which is not eligible under the DBES when located in Great Britain, or under the DBES as well as under the ECHS when located in Northern Ireland. Slaughter of DBES-eligible animals originating from Great Britain in Northern Ireland, or, vice versa, originating from Northern Ireland in Great Britain, is only authorised if access to all relevant data is ensured.

6. The competent authority must ensure that procedures used in the cutting plants ensure that the following lymph nodes have been removed:

- Popliteal, ischiatic, superficial inguinal, deep inguinal, medial and lateral iliac, renal prefemoral, lumbar, costocervical, sternal, prescapular, axillary and caudal deep cervical.

7. Meat must be traceable back to the DBES-eligible animal, or after cutting, to the animals cut in the same batch, by means of an official tracing system until the time of slaughter. After slaughter, labels must be capable of tracing fresh meat and products referred to in Article 6(1)(b) and (c) back to the eligible animal to enable the consignment concerned to be recalled. Food for domestic carnivores must be traceable by means of accompanying documents and records.

8. All approved DBES-eligible carcasses must have individual numbers correlated with the ear tag number.

9. The United Kingdom must have detailed protocols in place covering:

   (a) tracing and controls prior to slaughter;
   (b) controls during slaughter;
   (c) controls during processing of food for domestic carnivores;
   (d) all labelling and certification requirements after slaughter to the point of sale.

10. The competent authority must set up a system for recording checks on compliance so that control can be demonstrated.
The establishment

11. To obtain approval, the establishment must, in addition to all other requirements of this Decision, devise and implement a system whereby the DBES-eligible meat and/or DBES-eligible product is identifiable and all meat can be traced back to the DBES-eligible animal, or after cutting, to the animals cut in the same batch. The system must facilitate full traceability of the meat or products at all stages and records must be retained for at least two years. Details of the system to be employed must be given, in writing, by the management of the establishment to the competent authority.

12. The competent authority must assess, approve and monitor the system provided by the establishment in order to ensure that it provides full segregation and traceability both backwards and forwards.”
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Annex B  Eligibility of animals, products permitted for export and requirements for slaughterhouses

Annex C  Date-Based Export Scheme - pre-slaughter operation (applications)
ANNEX B

DBES - ELIGIBILITY OF ANIMALS, PRODUCTS PERMITTED FOR EXPORT AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Eligibility
1. Under the DBES bovine animals are eligible for slaughter for export if:
   a) they are more than six months and less than thirty months old at time of slaughter
   b) they were born and reared in the UK after 1 August 1996;
   c) at the time of slaughter they are not the offspring of a BSE case or suspect BSE case;
   d) their dam has survived for 6 months after their birth; and
   e) they have been clearly identifiable throughout their lives; their dates of birth and the identities of their dams are known and all movements are recorded either on an animal passport or a computerised tracing system.

Products
2. The DBES allows the export of the following products derived from eligible UK bovines:
   a) ‘fresh meat’ as defined in Directive 64/433/EEC which has been deboned and had all adherent tissues, including obvious nervous and lymphatic tissues, removed;
   b) ‘minced meat’ and ‘meat preparations’ as defined in Council Directive 94/65/EC; and
   d) petfood

Requirements for slaughterhouses
3. We are currently working on the detail of approval and operating procedures for DBES slaughterhouses. However the main controls we envisage will apply to slaughterhouses which slaughter DBES animals are:
• They must be approved by agriculture departments for the export of bovine material for human consumption under the DBES. Prior to DBES approval they must be licensed as full throughput slaughterhouses under the Fresh Meat (Hygiene and Inspection) Regulations 1995 which implement Council Directive 64/433.

• The only bovine animals which may be slaughtered there at any time are DBES eligible animals or, in Northern Ireland, ECHS eligible animals. other species may be slaughtered.

• They must be under permanent veterinary supervision by an OVS designated under the Fresh Meat (Hygiene and Inspection) Regulations 1995.

• They must be equipped with computer facilities to enable pre-slaughter checking of animals’ DBES eligibility.

• They must operate a comprehensive tracing and reconciliation system for the raw material through the production process. This system must guarantee that meat can be back traced to a specific animal or the batch in which the animal was slaughtered and that all meat derived from a specific animal can be traced after slaughter to the individual animal or, in the case of cut meat, to batches of slaughtered animals. This system must be approved by the agriculture departments.

• They must operate a registration system to permit cross checking between incoming animals and outgoing material which can be verified and checked by the MHS OVS.

• Additional export approved (XAP) marks and labels must be applied to the meat by MHS staff.

• Export consignments and consignments sent to establishments approved for the export of eligible bovine products (XAP approved) for further processing must be accompanied by the appropriate veterinary certificate.
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DATE-BASED EXPORT SCHEME - PRE-SLAUGHTER OPERATION (APPLICATIONS)

1. This paper sets out the proposed procedures for operation of the Date-based Export Scheme (DBES) pre-slaughter. These procedures are designed to ensure that the requirements of Council Decision 98/256/EC (as amended by the Commission’s Decision of 25 November making provision for the DBES) are met.

Criteria

2. Council Decision 98/256/EC (as amended) permits the export of deboned beef and certain products derived from animals fulfilling the following criteria:

- they are more than six months and less than thirty months old at time of slaughter
- they were born and reared in the UK after 1 August 1996;
- at the time of slaughter they are not the offspring of a BSE case or suspect BSE case;
- their dam has survived for 6 months after their birth; and
- they have been clearly identifiable throughout their lives; their dates of birth and the identities of their dams are known and all movements are recorded either on an animal passport or a computerised tracing system.

We have carried out trials of the systems which we will be operating to verify that the dam survival criterion has been fulfilled by reference to a series of official databases (see paragraph 7). These trials have confirmed that the success rate for animals under 12 months is very low (less than 10%). This was to be expected because the main source of evidence that the dam was still alive 6 months after the animal’s birth is a record on the Cattle Tracing System database that the dam has had a subsequent calf. We therefore propose to operate a 12 month minimum age limit for applications for DBES eligibility. This should maximise the positive results from the database checks and will help to keep the scheme charges down.
Proof of Dam Survival

3. The ‘dam survival’ requirement - i.e. that the dams lived for at least six months after the birth of the animal intended for slaughter for export- is the most difficult to prove. (It is designed to remove the remote possibility that a cow might have passed on BSE to its calf before birth and then died or been killed before showing clinical symptoms of disease.)

4. In Great Britain there is no simple way of proving that dams were alive on a certain date. It would not be possible to immediately establish dam survival at the slaughterhouse. Therefore, in order to check dam survival, we will require that applications for eligibility checks for animals intended for slaughter for export are submitted in advance of the animals’ proposed date of slaughter. In addition, because slaughterhouses must be dedicated to export animals, it is necessary to prevent ineligible animals being presented at the slaughterhouse.

5. Council Decision 98/256/EC (as amended) requires that the Agriculture Departments have obtained and verified positive official evidence of dam survival. We propose to do this by a search of Agriculture Department databases for an entry proving dam survival or by written evidence from an official source.

6. In the longer term we will use the Cattle Tracing System as the means to check eligibility.

Official databases

7. The official databases we will search are:

   a) Cattle Tracing System/Cattle Passports System - for proof that the dam was alive because her ID is on the passport of a subsequent calf; the dam died or was moved on a certain date;

   b) OTMS Database - dam was slaughtered under the OTMS on a certain date;

   c) Subsidy Databases (suckler cow premium and hill livestock compensatory allowance) - there was a subsidy claim for the dam on a certain date;

   d) Selective Cull Database - dam was slaughtered under the cull on a certain date;

   e) Notifiable Diseases Database - dam’s details are on the database as a TB reactor on a certain date.
Written Evidence

8. If no evidence of dam survival or of the dam’s death is found through the database check, then the applicant will be offered the option of providing written evidence if he/she wishes to pursue the application for that animal.

9. The written evidence we will accept is:
   a) a reference to a TB test undertaken by an Agriculture Department Official; or
   b) a statement from a veterinarian who is a ministry Local Veterinary Inspector that they saw the dam alive on a date 6 months or more after the birth of the animal whose meat is intended for export

Pre-slaughter Applications

10. The application process is detailed below.
   a. The slaughterhouse submits an application for the cattle it wishes to slaughter for export (which would still be on farms) to the DBES Unit based in Gloucester. These can be in electronic form. The application contains the following details (taken from the animal’s passport):
      (i) Animal’s Official Ear number
      (ii) Identity of the Animal’s Dam (and any previous identifiers)
      (iii) Current location of the animal (CPH)
   b. The animals’ details are entered on the DBES IT system and the system checks them against the Scheme criteria (paragraph 2) this includes:
      (i) a check against the details held for the animal on CTS. We will reject any mismatches and animals for which passports were applied for late
      (ii) a search on the Offspring Cull database
      (iii) a search of official databases (see paragraph 7) to see if they can confirm dam survival;
   c. If the database search does not confirm dam survival written evidence may be accepted instead (see paragraph 8).
d. Animals found to be eligible will be registered on the DBES IT system. The slaughterhouse and owner of the animals will be notified which animals have passed or failed the eligibility checks;

e. When an animal is presented at slaughter, Meat Hygiene Service staff at the DBES approved slaughterhouse will verify, through direct access to the IT system, that it is on the database and is still eligible. This check is to eliminate the possibility that the animal’s dam may have become a BSE case between the animal’s registration on the DBES IT system and its presentation at the slaughterhouse.

MAFF

December 1998
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