Foreword

This is the first of the narrative volumes in which we examine in detail different aspects of the BSE story. The format that we have adopted is to separate our summary of the primary facts from our discussion of the issues raised by them. The intention is that these volumes will provide a detailed explanation for conclusions that we have expressed in vol. 1: Findings and Conclusions.

This volume starts with the identification of the emergence of BSE and goes on to cover the introduction of the ruminant feed ban, compulsory slaughter with compensation of all BSE suspects, and notification of the ruminant feed ban to other countries. It thus includes what many consider to be the most significant measures that were taken to address the dangers posed by BSE to animal health and human health. Steps taken to address the risks from bovine sourced medicinal products for both humans and animals began during this period, but are dealt with separately in vol. 7: Medicines and Cosmetics.


While this volume deals with action taken in relation to both human and animal health up to the Southwood Report, thereafter these topics are dealt with separately in vol. 5: Animal Health, 1989–96 and vol. 6: Human Health, 1989–96.

Rather than follow a comprehensive chronology, we have devoted separate chapters to:

i. The identification of a new disease in cattle.

ii. Dissemination of information.

iii. Epidemiology.

iv. The ruminant feed ban.

v. Human health implications, notification, and slaughter and compensation.

The final chapter in this volume goes beyond July 1998 and considers the notification of the ruminant feed ban to other countries.