



CONSIDERATION OF VARIOUS OPTIONS RELATING TO A RELAXATION OF THE TOTAL FEED BAN

ISSUE

1. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the devolved Rural Affairs Departments and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) asked SEAC to consider the potential for further transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) infections and epidemics to arise as a result of possible implementation of various future options for relaxing the TSE-related feed controls. After deliberation of the proposals at SEAC 99 in December 2007, a draft Statement was prepared and circulated to the committee for comment in February 2008. The statement has been amended to address the comments received. However, given the nature of some of the comments, it has been agreed that the draft Statement should be subject to further discussion to ensure a consensus opinion is reached.
2. The Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens TSE Working Group also discussed the proposals to relax the total feed ban and made a number of observations which it wished to draw to SEAC's attention.

AGENDA DOCUMENTS

3. The following documents, as Annexes to this paper, have been provided:
 - Annex 1: a revised text of the draft SEAC Statement to address the comments received. Differing opinions on the level of risk described in paragraph 11 were received. A drafting note included in this paragraph reflects the difference of opinion.
 - Annex 2: comments that have not been addressed in the present draft of the statement about the viability of the proposal in

paragraph 13 of the draft SEAC Statement to express the overall risk that would result from relaxations to BSE controls as an expected increase in the number of vCJD cases.

- Annex 3: sections from the minutes of the meeting on 21 February 2008 of the TSE Working Group of the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens, which records their discussion on the proposed relaxations of the total feed ban.
4. As the statement is a working draft in progress and the comments outlined in Annexes 2 and 3 relate to working drafts of the statement, these annexes are restricted. Members have also been provided with the original documentation (paper 99/4 and associated key papers) that were issued for SEAC 99.

ADVICE SOUGHT FROM SEAC

5. SEAC is requested to consider and comment on the draft statement (Annex 1), noting the comments outlined in Annexes 2 and 3.
6. Following the meeting the statement will be revised in light of the committee's discussion and circulated to members to ensure the committee is content with the wording.

**SEAC SECRETARIAT
APRIL 2008**