

BSE

SURVEILLANCE

Maintaining
confidence in
Canadian beef



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

Canada

BSE

SURVEILLANCE

Maintaining confidence in Canadian beef

This brochure provides Canadian cattle producers with information about the national bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) surveillance program and its benefits to the cattle industry.

The BSE surveillance program

The BSE surveillance program provides essential information that tells us how effective Canada's BSE control measures are. It is also fundamental to maintaining and enhancing Canada's market access.

The program continues to demonstrate the low and declining level of BSE in the national herd.

BSE surveillance is a shared responsibility. Cattle producers, industry, veterinarians and governments all have a role to play.

Benefits to cattle producers

The information collected through the BSE surveillance program helps Canada to secure and maintain international market access for our top-quality cattle and beef products.

The program also helps to maintain consumer confidence in Canadian beef by demonstrating the very low level of the disease in the cattle population.

Reimbursement available

When an eligible sample is submitted for testing, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) pays the producer **\$75** to help cover eventual carcass disposal costs.

Additionally, the CFIA will pay up to **\$100** for veterinary services (paid directly to the veterinarian).

Testing criteria

The BSE surveillance program targets animals most at risk for the disease, which are:

- cattle over the age of 30 months that are dead, down, dying or diseased
- cattle exhibiting strong clinical signs of BSE, including the following:
 - nervous or aggressive behaviour
 - abnormal posture
 - lack of co-ordination
 - difficulty rising from a lying position

BSE surveillance levels

To maintain BSE surveillance levels, the CFIA works closely with cattle producers, industry, veterinarians and provinces and territories.


Producer participation in the BSE surveillance program has been very high. This stewardship has been the cornerstone of domestic and international consumer confidence in our beef.

Food safety and animal health protection from BSE

BSE surveillance is not a food safety measure. The food supply is protected through the removal of specified risk material (SRM)—the tissues that harbour BSE—from all cattle slaughtered for human consumption.

The removal of SRM from the food supply has been a legal requirement in Canada since 2003.

SRM is also banned from all animal feed, pet food and fertilizer produced in Canada. This measure helps to protect the animal feed supply, and is critical in our efforts to eliminate BSE from the national herd.



Maintaining our surveillance levels will help us to keep our status as a “controlled BSE risk” country, as recognized by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

This status clearly acknowledges the effectiveness of Canada’s BSE surveillance, control and elimination measures, and helps in securing international market access for our beef and cattle.

For more information

on the BSE surveillance program, call **1-866-400-4244**

or visit our website at: www.inspection.gc.ca

Having an animal tested

If you have an animal that meets any of the testing criteria, call your veterinarian or the nearest CFIA office. You can also call the CFIA's BSE surveillance hotline at **1-866-400-4244** during regular business hours.

Your veterinarian or a CFIA inspector will come to your farm to assess the animal and, if appropriate, collect a brain tissue sample from the animal for testing. They will also discuss the reimbursement process with you.

You will be responsible for maintaining control of the animal's carcass until testing is complete.

