

Feed controls – stopping BSE (mad cow disease)

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Why control stock foods?

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy or BSE, also called 'mad cow disease', does not occur in Australia. Overseas the disease has been shown to spread through meat meal fed to cattle. New South Wales has banned the feeding of all animal material, such as meat or bone meal, fish or feather meals, to ruminant animals such as cattle, sheep, goats and deer.

The bans provide insurance against any spread of the disease in Australia and satisfy the requirements of some of our meat export markets. Label statements about the content of 'restricted animal material' or 'RAM' are required on stock foods to help protect the Australian livestock industries against infection with BSE. Tallow and used cooking oils which meet prescribed standards, gelatin and milk are exempt from the bans.

What are 'stock foods'?

Manufactured stock foods are foods for farm animals ('food producing species'), or horses, that have undergone a manufacturing process. They include:

- complete feeds,
- feed supplements,
- premixes,
- licks,
- blocks,
- cracked or rolled grain or seeds,
- compounded milk powders,
- all animal meals – meat, fish, blood, bone or feather meals.

Buying and using stockfeed: The four point plan to avoid BSE in NSW herds and flocks

Do not feed animal materials to ruminants

Do not feed animal materials such as meat, fish or feather meal, bone or blood meal, or pet foods, to cattle, sheep, goats or deer. The feeding of all animal products ('restricted animal material') to ruminant animals is illegal. Ensure that ruminants do not have access to stored or spilled feed or poultry litter. Feed testing is being carried out to check compliance with the law.

Obey label statements

Do not use any feed for ruminant animals if it says on the label that it contains restricted animal material. If feed is labelled only for feeding to particular animals - especially pigs or poultry – do not feed it to other animals.

Labels on stock food containing animal tissue, bone, blood or feather meal should contain this statement:

This product contains restricted animal material – DO NOT FEED TO CATTLE, SHEEP, GOATS, DEER OR OTHER RUMINANTS.

If the product is suitable for ruminants it should contain this statement:

This product does not contain restricted animal material.

Purchase only labelled feeds

If in doubt as to whether a feed contains animal material, do not buy or feed it to cattle, sheep, goats or deer. Unless the label or delivery docket / invoice clearly indicates that the feed is suitable for ruminants, do not buy or use it for ruminants.

Keep feeds separate on farm

Farms running both pigs/poultry and cattle, sheep, goats or deer should ensure that ruminant feeds are not mixed with pig/poultry feeds. Ruminant feeds should not be contaminated during transport, mixing, storage or feeding out of pig/poultry feeds.

Join a Quality Assurance Program – such as LPA/Cattlecare/Flockcare/Quality Plus – which allows tracing of bought-in feed used on your farm. Implement a feed QA program to ensure that ruminant feeds are not contaminated on-farm by other feeds.



Ingredients such as whole grain or vegetable protein meals are excluded from the legislation unless they are sold or labelled as stock foods. Hay, straw and chaffs are specifically excluded. Gelatine and milk, or products made entirely from milk, are exempt.

Tallow which has a maximum of 2% moisture and insoluble impurities (M&I) is excluded from the bans. Used cooking oil is considered tallow if it is filtered to remove all particulate matter and meets the tallow standard for M&I.

Are horse feeds stock food?

Yes. Amended legislation includes horses in the stock food controls. Premixes and similar supplements for horses are exempt and do not require the Restricted Animal Material or other stock food statements.

Minimum labelling requirements

Details of the person marketing the product, and the weight, are required under other legislation.

The NSW Stock Foods Regulation requires only a statement about the stock the food is to be used for – indicating the class of stock and the age or stage of production – and a ‘restricted animal material’ statement. Details of added salt or urea must be provided.

Details of the feed formulation are no longer required, but many manufacturers include this information for the benefit of users.

Confirming compliance

Regulatory Officers employed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) visit stock feed manufacturers, retailers and users (farmers) to ensure compliance with the labelling and feeding provisions. Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) also checks compliance with the feed bans.

Further information

- Primefact 318 *Manufactured stock food requirements*

Publications available

For a complete list of NSW Department of Primary Industries Primefacts and Farm Enterprise Budgets on the web, please see: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

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