

Advice 03-2011 of the Scientific Committee of the FASFC on a project of Royal decree modifying the Royal decree of 22th of December, 2005 fixing complementary measures about the organization of the official controls concerning animal products aimed at human consumption – Revision of the BSE monitoring programme

The Scientific Committee is asked to evaluate if a revision of the BSE monitoring programme, i.e. raising the age limit at 72 months for the mandatory testing for the detection of BSE in healthy cattle slaughtered for human consumption, will sufficiently ensure the protection of public and animal health. The limit age for mandatory testing of emergency slaughtered cattle is maintained at 48 months.

Because the protection of public health is mainly ensured by the removal of specified risk material (SRM) at slaughter, and because the protection of animal health is mainly ensured by the Feed Ban, the Scientific Committee emphasizes the predominant significance to maintain these two measures.

The results of the quantitative risk assessment, realized with the most recent Belgian data, indicate that the number of non-detected BSE cases (i.e. the number of infected cattle which would enter the food chain) when the age limit is 48 months for healthy and for emergency slaughtered cattle (current scenario) is 0,33 cases per year (less than 1 case), and that the number of non-detected BSE cases when the age limit is raised to 72 months for healthy cattle and maintained at 48 for emergency slaughtered cattle (future scenario) is 0,364 cases per year (also less than one case per year). Consequently, there is no significant difference between the risk levels of the current monitoring programme and the proposed revised monitoring programme.

In conclusion, the Scientific Committee approves the submitted project of Royal Decree.

The full text is available on this website in dutch and in french, respectively under the section “Wetenschappelijk Comité/Adviezen” and “Comité scientifique/Avis”.