

# Georgia FFA Agricultural Communications CDE

## 2011 State Editing Quiz

Contestant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

FFA Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Twenty-five words or phrases are underlined in the news release below. Some are correct and others contain errors. Indicate in the spaces to the right if the words or phrases are correct (C) or incorrect (I). If they are incorrect, **correct them using standard editing marks in the text**. You may find errors related to grammar, punctuation, word usage, spelling or other Associated Press Stylebook issues.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### USDA ANNOUNCES BSE TEST RESULTS AND NEW BSE CONFIRMATORY TESTING PROTACOL<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON -- Agriculture Sec. Mike Johanns<sup>2</sup> today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has received final test results from The Veterinary Laboratories Agency in Weybridge, England, confirming that a sample from an animal that was blocked from the food supply in November 2004<sup>3</sup> has tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Johanns' also directed<sup>4</sup> USDA scientists to work with international experts to thoughtfully develop a new protocol that includes performing dual confirmatory tests in the event of another "inconclusive" BSE screening test.

"We are currently testing nearly one thousand animals per day<sup>5</sup> as part of our BSE enhanced surveillance program, more than 388,000 total tests,<sup>6</sup> and this is the first confirmed case resulting from our surveillance," Johanns said. "I am encouraged that our interlocking safeguards are working exactly as intended. This animal was blocked from entering the food supply because of the firewalls we have in place. Americans have every reason to continue to be confident in the safety of our beef."<sup>7</sup>

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Effective immediately, if another BSE rapid screening test results in inconclusive findings, U.S.D.A. will run<sup>8</sup> both an IHC and Western blot confirmatory test. If results from either confirmatory test are positive, the sample will be considered positive for BSE.

"I want to make sure we continue to give consumers every reason to be confident in the health of our cattle heard<sup>9</sup>," Johanns said. "By adding the 2<sup>nd</sup> confirmatory test,<sup>10</sup> we boost that confidence and bring our testing in line with the evolving worldwide trend to use both IHC and Western blot together as confirmatory tests for BSE."

USDA has initiated an epidemiological investigation to determine the animal's herd of origin. That investigation is not yet complete. The animal was born before the United States<sup>11</sup> instituted a ruminant-to-ruminant feed ban in Aug. 1997,<sup>12</sup> which prevents the use of most mammalian protein in cattle feed. According to internationally accepted research, feed containing meat-and-bone meal is the primary way BSE is transferred to the cattle population.

The animal was selected for testing because, as a non-ambulatory animal, it was considered to be at higher risk for BSE. An initial screening test on the animal in November 2004<sup>13</sup> was inconclusive, triggering USDA to conduct the internationally accepted confirmatory IHC tests. Those test results were negative. Earlier this month, USDA's Office of the Inspector General recommended further testing of the 7-month-old sample<sup>14</sup> using another internationally recognized confirmatory test, the Western blot. Unlike the IHC, the Western blot was reactive, prompting USDA to send samples from the animal to the Weybridge laboratory<sup>15</sup> for further analysis.

The laboratory in Wyebridge, England<sup>16</sup> is recognized by the World Animal Health Organization, or OIE, as a world reference laboratory for BSE. Weybridge officials this week conducted a combination of rapid, IHC and Western blot testing on tissue samples from the animal in question. At the same time these diagnostic tests were being run by Weybridge, USDA conducted it's own additional tests.<sup>17</sup>

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As an non-ambulatory,<sup>18</sup> or "downer" animal, the cow was prohibited from entering the human food supply, under an interim final rule in effect since January 2004. Research has shown that BSE is most likely to be found in older non-ambulatory cattle, animals showing signs of central nervous system disorders, injured or emaciated animals, and cattle that have died for unexplaiuned reasons.<sup>19</sup> USDA's testing program<sup>20</sup> targets these groups of animals for testing.

The system of human health protections includes the USDA ban on specified risk materials, or SRM's, from the food supply. SRM's are most likely to contain the BSE agent if it is present in an animal. Additional measures, such as a longstanding ban<sup>21</sup> on importing cattle and beef products from high-risk countries, a ruminant-to-ruminant feed ban, U.S. slaughter practices, and aggressive surveillance provide a series of inter locking safeguards<sup>22</sup> to protect U.S. consumers and animal health.

USDA remains committed to protecting both U.S. consumers and U.S. livestock from bse,<sup>23</sup> and to that end continues efforts to detect the disease through its enhanced BSE surveillance program. Once sufficient data from the surveillance program has been accumulated, USDA will consult with outside experts to analyze it and determine whether any changes<sup>24</sup> to existing risk management measures are necessary.

This confirmed case of BSE in no way impacts<sup>25</sup> the safety of our nation's food supply. As the epidemiological investigation progresses, USDA will continue to communicate findings in a timely and transparent manner.

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