

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Trader Notice MH 14/2021 - Update

To: All Food Business Operators at premises approved to slaughter and process beef.

Subject: Implementation of Ireland's Negligible Risk BSE Status and Changes to SRM Definition - Updated

Background

As a result of evidence provided by DAFM on the incidence of BSE, and the robust wide ranging controls in place along the food and feed chains in Ireland, the OIE issued a certificate of Negligible BSE Risk Status to Ireland in May 2021.

On the 6th August 2021, The EU Commission issued [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2021/1321](#) amending the Annex to [Decision 2007/453/EC](#) as regards the BSE status of Ireland. As a result, Ireland is now listed as a Negligible BSE Risk country and can implement the Specified Risk Material (SRM) definitions and controls associated with that status.

Changes to the Definition of SRM for animals originating in Countries with Negligible Risk Status.

In accordance with Annex V of [EU Regulation No. 999/2001](#), for animals originating in countries with **negligible risk** status, the definition of bovine SRM is:

The skull excluding the mandible and including the brain and eyes, and the spinal cord of animals aged over 12 months.

This means that all of the other tissues previously defined as SRM, such as the tonsils, vertebral column (>30 months), the caecum, mesentery and last 4 meters of the small intestine are no longer SRM and can be considered as edible material if they are hygienically harvested and passes PM inspection

Alternatively, bovine intestines can now be considered as Category 3 animal by-product provided that they are emptied and cleaned to the standard expected.

For animals Imported from Countries with Controlled Risk Status

In accordance with Annex V of [EU Regulation No. 999/2001](#), for animals originating in countries with **controlled risk** status, the definition of bovine SRM is:

- *The skull excluding the mandible and including the brain and eyes, and the spinal cord of animals aged over 12 months.*
- *the vertebral column excluding the vertebrae of the tail, the spinous and transverse processes of the cervical, thoracic and lumbar vertebrae and the median sacral crest and wings of the sacrum, but including the dorsal root ganglia, of animals aged over 30 months; and*

- *the tonsils, the last four meters of the small intestine, the caecum and the mesentery of animals of all ages.*

Food Business Operators slaughtering animals originating in countries with a controlled risk status (includes Great Britain, but not Northern Ireland - see [OIE Link](#) here) must have procedures in place to ensure that all the SRMs listed above are removed, handled, stained and disposed of as Category 1 Animal By Product.

Implications for Irish and EU Trade

From **6th September 2021**, in relation to animals originating in a Negligible Risk country there will no longer be a legal requirement to:

1. Remove tonsillar material from tongues.
2. Segregate intestines into SRM and non-SRM.
3. Apply red-striped labels to vertebral columns of beef carcasses over 30 months.
4. Insert number of carcasses over 30 months requiring vertebral column removal on Commercial Documents.
5. Segregate bones in the boning-hall into SRM and non-SRM.

Any former SRM tissues that are harvested for human consumption must be harvested in such a way that they:

- Receive post-mortem inspection
- Are harvested in a hygienic manner that ensures that no contamination is found in the finished product.
- As stated above, intestines diverted to Category 3 ABP must be adequately cleaned and emptied.

Implications for Third Country Trade

Many Third Country certificates have very specific statements on:

- Ireland's former BSE Status (Controlled Risk)
- Definition of SRM (or tissues that must be excluded from trade with that country).

DAFM will communicate with these Third Countries to notify them of Ireland's changed BSE risk status and to attempt to realise changes in the certificate attestations to reflect our current BSE risk status.

Until notified of any changes to these certification requirements, it is incumbent on all FBOs producing, storing or trading in beef for export to Third Countries that the requirements of all Third Country markets continue to be met in relation to the segregation and exclusion of former SRMs from consignments. An example of this is the requirement to continue to cut bovine tongues destined for Japan or the US in such a way that the lingual tonsil is removed.

Meat Hygiene Section

1 September 2021