

Statement of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) on its Report and Scientific Opinion on mammalian derived meat and bone meal forming a cross-contaminant of animal feedstuffs, adopted on 24-25 September 1998, adopted at the SSC meeting of 26-27 October 2000

In 1998, the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) was invited to address the following question:

"Does there exist an acceptable level of cross-contamination with mammalian meat-and-bone meal of ruminant feed? If yes, which one and under which conditions is it applicable?"

On the basis of the report of a working group, the Scientific Steering Committee adopted on 24-25 September 1998 the following opinion.

"The Scientific Steering Committee is of the opinion that in principle, cross-contamination with mammalian meat-and-bone meal of animal feedstuffs is not acceptable and that only a zero level of cross-contamination can exclude any risk resulting from it. The risk for cross-contamination should be avoided by appropriate measures during the production, transport, storage and processing of the raw materials and of the produced feedstuffs.

For practical reasons and taking into account the present technical limits of detection as well as a risk analyses based on present knowledge, the SSC considers that levels of cross-contamination of ruminant feeds with mammalian meat-and-bone meal - derived from raw materials sourced and processed according to the conditions laid down in the SSC's opinion on the safety of MBM - which exceeds 0.50% MBM (or 0.15% animal bone fragments or 0.25% proteins ¹, whichever is the lowest) should be condemned."

The SSC wishes to confirm that in principle, cross-contamination with mammalian meat-and-bone meal of ruminant feedstuffs is not acceptable. Feed cross-contaminated above levels that are reliably quantifiable should be condemned. In 1998, this level was put at 0,5% because of technical limits of quantification. At the same time, the SSC carried out a preliminary assessment of the risk for cattle resulting from a feed contaminated at that level of 0.5% if the MBM was produced in accordance with the SSC opinion on meat-and-bone meal i.e. if the MBM was produced exclusively from material fit for human consumption, without SRM and under pressure standards.

The SSC further confirms that it is presently updating the quantitative risk assessment of cross-contaminated feedstuffs presented in the report of September 1998, in the light of new information that meanwhile has become available, especially the one presented in its opinion of *Opinion of 13-14 April 2000 on Oral exposure of humans to the BSE agent: infective dose and species barrier.*

¹ Considering that, on average, proteins account for at least 50% of meat and bone meals, 0.25% protein represents the equivalent of 0.50% meat and bone meal.