

**To:** District Council Chief EHOs  
Group Chief EHOs  
NIFLG Members

**CC:** LACORS  
CIEH

ENF/NI/08/22

25<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Dear Colleague

**THE TRANSMISSIBLE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHIES (AMENDMENT)  
REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2008**

I am writing to let you know that after considering the response to the consultation and following amendments to Regulation (EC) 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Community TSE Regulations), the above Regulations have now been made and **will come into operation on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008**.

The above Regulations **will apply to animals slaughtered on or after 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008** and have the following effect:

- (i) The age at which bovine VC is classified as SRM has been increased from 24 months to 30 months (for animals slaughtered on or after 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008), following amendment to the Community TSE Regulations. Therefore from 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008, only VC of bovine animals aged over 30 months at slaughter would be SRM. Consequently, it is no longer required to remove VC from under 30 month bovines (slaughtered after 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008) prior to sale.
- (ii) As a result district councils will no longer be required to authorise butchers to remove VC from bovine carcasses 24-30 months (slaughtered after 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008) as butchers no longer require specific authorisation to do so. All butchers premises will now be able to handle; process and remove VC from bovines under 30 months at slaughter (and slaughtered on or after 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008) if they wish
- (iii) VC will still be SRM in those bovines aged 24-30 months at slaughter which were slaughtered before the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008. Transitional provisions in the above Regulations will allow VC SRM to be removed from 24-30 months carcasses slaughtered before 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008 that may still be in the distribution chain; the VC from these carcasses will still have to be removed and disposed of as SRM. In particular, the transitional arrangements allow:



- **Slaughterhouses: until 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008** to consign carcasses containing VC SRM derived from 24-30 months animals slaughtered before 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008 to authorised butchers (authorised on or before 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008) and or cutting plants (whether or not authorised under paragraph 12(1)(a)).
- **Cutting plants: until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2008** to remove VC SRM from 24-30 animals slaughtered before 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008.
- **Authorised butchers: until 31<sup>st</sup> May** to remove VC SRM from 24-30 months animals slaughtered before 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008. This applies only to butchers which were authorised at 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

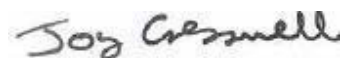
**Therefore district councils will continue to have enforcement responsibilities at authorised butchers until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2008.**

**Following the transitional period, all 24-30 months carcasses (derived from bovine animals slaughtered before 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008) containing VC SRM will need to be treated as animal by product.**

- (iv) There is no change to the current requirements to clearly identify meat containing VC that is not SRM with a blue stripe. All meat containing VC derived from bovine animals under 30 months of age at slaughter must be clearly marked with a blue stripe on the label. As butchers are only allowed to handle meat containing VC derived from bovine under 30 months, **all meat containing VC at butchers premises must be marked with a blue stripe.**
- (v) There is also no change to the requirement requiring specific authorisation for cutting plants to remove VC from over thirty month (OTM) bovine. Only cutting plants authorised under paragraph 12(1)(a) of the above Regulations can remove VC from OTM bovines. **It therefore continues to be an offence for any other cutting plants or butchers to remove VC from OTM bovines.**
- (vi) Revocation of the Beef Bones Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 and the Beef Bones (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 will allow UK sourced beef bones to be used in food manufacturing. However, current prohibition on the use of bones or bone-in cuts of bovine, ovine and caprine animals in the production of mechanically separated meat (MSM) means that **beef bones can not be used in the production of MSM.**

I attach a copy of my letter that will be issued to authorised butchers and operators of meat plants in Northern Ireland informing them of the above changes for your record.

Yours sincerely



**JOY CRESSWELL**  
**Meat Hygiene & Imported Food Unit**