

To: Directors of Public Protection

21 April 2008

Reference: ENF/W/08/022

Dear Director

VERIFICATION OF COLD TREATMENT OF C. BOVIS IN COLD STORES

This letter concerns new arrangements for the verification of cold treatments for *Cysticercus bovis* (*C. bovis*) in standalone cold stores, which some local authorities have carried out since 1 January 2006. For further information about *C. bovis* see the attached background note.

The purpose of this letter is to alert local authorities that with effect from 1 May 2008, all such verification work should be carried out by an Authorised Officer (AO) of the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS).

Details of the requirements for the cold treatments for *C. bovis* in cold stores will be added to the Guide to Food Hygiene and other Regulations for the UK Meat Industry (MIG) in the near future. A copy of the new entry is attached and the MIG is available at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/guidehygienemeat>

If local authorities receive enquiries about *C. bovis* treatments these should be referred to the abattoir where the meat originated.

Yours sincerely



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Background Note

C. bovis is a parasite (*Taenia saginata*) with cattle as its main intermediate host where the larval form in these animals is a cysticercus in the muscles and heart. Man can become infected (as part of another stage in the lifecycle of *C. Bovis*) by ingestion of undercooked or raw meat.

Meat found infected with *C. bovis* at post-mortem inspection is to be declared unfit for human consumption. However, when the carcass is not generally infected the parts not infected can be declared fit for human consumption after having undergone a cold treatment. (*Regulation (EC) 854/2004, Annex I, Section IV, Chapter IX, B2*). Treatment is either at a temperature not exceeding -7°C for a period not less than 21 days, or at a temperature not exceeding -10°C for a period not less than 14 days. Following treatment there is a need to verify that the appropriate treatment has taken place.

In 2005 MHS reported that *C. bovis* was found in 65 abattoirs in 565 carcasses. Some of these will have been subject to cold treatment in-house or in standalone cold stores. In the latter case (unless the meat is returned to the slaughterhouse) the Official Veterinarian (OV) would have verified the time/temperature conditions before the meat left the cold store. The transfer of enforcement responsibility for cold stores to local authorities on 1 January 2006 raised the issue of who should carry out certification of such meat at stand-alone cold store premises. The attached letter clarifies the arrangements with effect from 1 May 2008.

CHAPTER 10 DRESSING OF CARCASSES

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| <p>C18. Slaughterhouse operators must follow the instructions of the competent authority to ensure that post-mortem inspection of all slaughtered animals is carried out under suitable conditions in accordance with Regulation 854/2004.</p> <p><i>853/2004 Annex III Section I Slaughter Hygiene: Chapter IV point 12</i></p> | |
| | <p><i>Cysticercus bovis (C. bovis)</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the OV's instructions to ensure that post-mortem inspection is carried out under suitable conditions in accordance. <p>C18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat infected with <i>C. bovis</i> is to be declared unfit for human consumption. However uninfected parts of animals not generally infected, may be declared fit for human consumption after cold treatment. <p>854/2004 Annex I Section IV Chapter IX B2</p> | <p><i>When not generally infected with <i>C.bovis</i>, parts of a carcass may be declared fit for human consumption if they undergo cold treatment for a specified time at a set temperature (i.e. <u>either</u> 14 days at a temperature not exceeding -10°C <u>or</u> 21 days at a temperature not exceeding -7°C). See Part One Chapter 6.6 for more information about <i>C.bovis</i>.</i></p> <p><i>The carcass will be cut up to determine the extent of the infection. Those parts that are not infected must be boxed and placed in cold storage. The boxes will be detained and officially labelled to ensure that they are not used until the OV is satisfied that the meat has received satisfactory treatment.</i></p> <p><i>Special arrangements</i> - <i>if cold storage facilities are not available at the slaughterhouse, the meat may be sent to an approved standalone cold store for treatment by arrangement with the OV.</i></p> <p><i>The transfer permit that must accompany the meat must include the total number of boxes being consigned to the cold store and the number of carcasses that have been boxed. Each box must be labelled 'C.bovis - Detained'.</i></p> <p><i>A charge will normally be made for an Authorised Officer (AO) to visit the cold store to check the treatment and, if there is no cause for concern, to release the meat. The AO will sign and return the transfer permit to the originating plant and, once released, the boxes can be identification marked by the cold store and despatched.</i></p> |