

# BSE - BABY FOODS

For info - and to ensure we do not get the blame for legislation that can be criticised on a scientific basis.

1. Southwood said para 5.3.5. BSE would most likely be in spleen and LYMPHATIC TISSUES in early stages of infection. On that basis Food Science (Dr Woodpe) were advised of the need to consider spleen, tonsil, thymus and lymph nodes as infected even in pre-clinical exposed cattle/sheep.
2. Southwood (same para) also recommended no use of ruminant offal or thymus in baby foods.
3. I have seen documents not including spleen but this is now included as a prohibited ingredient along with thymus (which under the Meat Hygiene Regs is included in part 1 of schedule 2 - ie it is classed as meat rather than offal). Brain cord and intestines are also included.
4. An important omission is lymph node. This was not identified specifically in previous regulations but is a high-risk tissue if BSE follows the line of scrapie though titres are lower than for terminal hind brain. In regard to baby food the decision has apparently been made that it is excluded from use because

DIE 016

"it is not normally used for human consumption".  
This may be true for baby food as currently prepared  
in the UK but not necessarily for imported food where  
"offal" may be variously interpreted and perhaps lymph  
nodes may be eaten. Even in this country in adult  
food prepared from bovine carcasses such items may  
be found in sausages & meat pies unless positive  
steps are taken to remove them. That may be done  
by reputable butchers and chain stores but not  
necessarily all. It is not illegal - or at best the  
legislation is weak & is not leaning towards  
consumer protection.

5. Udder and testicles are included in the baby food  
schedule "for the sake of consistency" not for the sake  
of safety from BSE. However alert minds here or  
abroad might infer that we think these are safe  
with potentially disastrous consequences for milk &  
semen use. Other inclusions (eg feet) seem nonsense  
but are less alarming.

6. I have discussed the above points from the  
scientific viewpoint with Alan Lawrence, Alison  
Reeres (previously with Dr M Woodfe at least in part  
(minutes 4th March 1989)) and yesterday and previous  
with the CVO. The CVO agrees the general princi-  
ple and it was made clear by me to Alison it must  
be him who finally decides agreement. Any delay  
in baby food will have repercussions for adult fe-  
ders and pet food - matters Alan Lawrence is dealing

To: WA Wilson.

5/5/89 R. Bondle

89/5.5/2.2

DTE 016