

13/3/83

DIS 829

USE OF OFFAL IN BABY FOODS

1. I have seen Mr Cockbill's minute of 28 February asking you to proceed with the prohibition on the use of offal in baby foods.
2. In his fourth paragraph, Mr Cockbill says that in notifying the EC Commission we can claim the need for urgent action on the basis of a "known health risk". I am concerned that this might be misinterpreted by the Commission and others. The Southwood Report concluded that, from present evidence, cattle are likely to prove a dead-end host for the BSE agent and that BSE is most unlikely to have any implications for human health. Our action in banning offal in baby foods is therefore a precautionary measure and not one to deal with a known risk.
3. In view of the sensitivity of this issue could I ask that you keep us in close touch with developments at your end and let us have the opportunity to see drafts of the notification, submission etc?

John Maslin
Animal Health Division
3 March 1989

Mr K Millar

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|----|----------------|---------------------|
| cc | Mrs Attridge | Dr Woolfe |
| | Mr Cruickshank | Mr Lawrence |
| | Dr Crossett | Mr Weir DOH |
| | Mr Suich | Mr Thomson DAFS |
| | Mr Cockbill | Miss Jones WOAD |
| | Dr Knowles | Mr McMurray DHSS/NI |
| | Mr Garnett | |
| | Dr Denner | |

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I agree

to Maslin

M-H 5 6/3
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