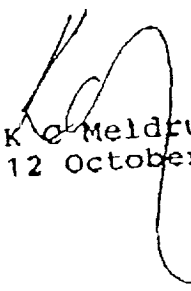


BSE: DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION AND FORECAST TRENDS

During the last few days there have been some totally inaccurate press reports which, to some extent, have been exacerbated by unauthorised disclosure of information. I would be grateful if recipients could take note of the following comments and take steps to ensure that no further unauthorised disclosure of information occurs.

1. Contractors disposing of BSE suspect carcasses are I understand provided with certain basic information concerned with the animals that they destroy. Such information should remain confidential to the contractor and should not be disclosed either to another company or the press.
2. It does appear as if ADAS are providing some information to the press on the number of cases of BSE that have been confirmed in the maternal transmission experiment. This should not take place and I would be grateful if Mr Bradley could draft a letter for my signature that I can send to Dr Walsh to confirm our understanding on the disclosure of information.
3. The press are keen to obtain forecasts on the incidence of BSE and no such figures should be provided at all. If we are forced to provide a figure then it must be carefully calculated, substantiated and cleared with me before release.
4. At the present time all papers are cleared by Tolworth before publication but if any oral information is to be provided to the media or press the same general rules apply. Anyone therefore speaking to the press or media should only comment within the ambit of the known facts and should not be persuaded to provide any embellishment!
5. Lastly, I have commented previously that we should not discuss the results of the maternal transmission experiment at Boxworth and I still hold to that view. If pressed for comment we should simply say that a number of cattle have succumbed to BSE at Boxworth but the relevance of this will not be known for some time and certainly until a significant number of animals have either survived or died and because of the blind nature of the trial.

No doubt if you have any queries on this minute you will let me know.


K C Meldrum
12 October 1992

Mr K C Taylor

cc's overleaf

92/10.12/2.1

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cc Mr M T Haddon
Mr I Crawford
Mr R C Lowson
Mr I B Robertson
Dr D Matthews
Mr J Maslin

Dr T W A Little)
Mr R Bradley)
Mr J Wilesmith) CVL
Mr G A H Wells)
Mr M Dawson)