

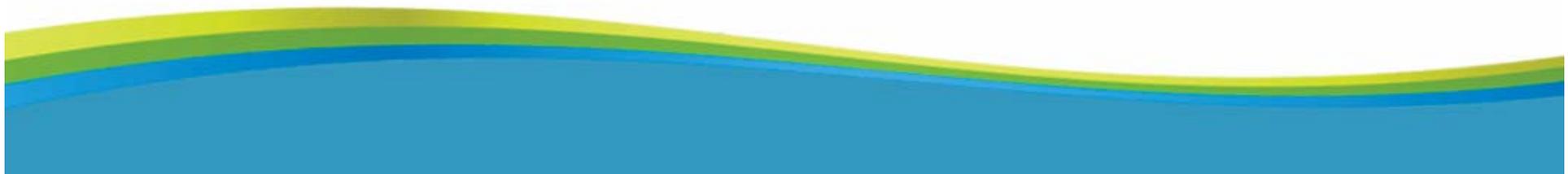
An Australian method to assess country BSE food safety risk

(2014 SRA-ANZ Annual Meeting)

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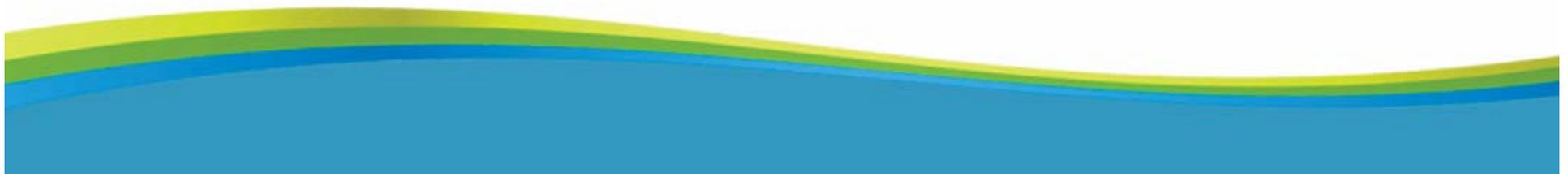
Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)

- FSANZ is a bi-national, independent, expertise-based statutory authority that develops food standards for composition, labelling, contaminants, microbiological limits, that apply to all foods produced or imported for sale in Australia and New Zealand
- In Australia, FSANZ develops food standards to cover the whole of the food supply chain – from paddock to plate
- FSANZ works in partnership with Australia's Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and the New Zealand Government



Outline

- **BSE – an infectious disease**
- **Australian Government's food safety policy on BSE**
- **Method applied by FSNAZ to assess country BSE food safety risk**
- **Outcome and current status of the Australian country BSE food safety assessments**
- **Key observations**



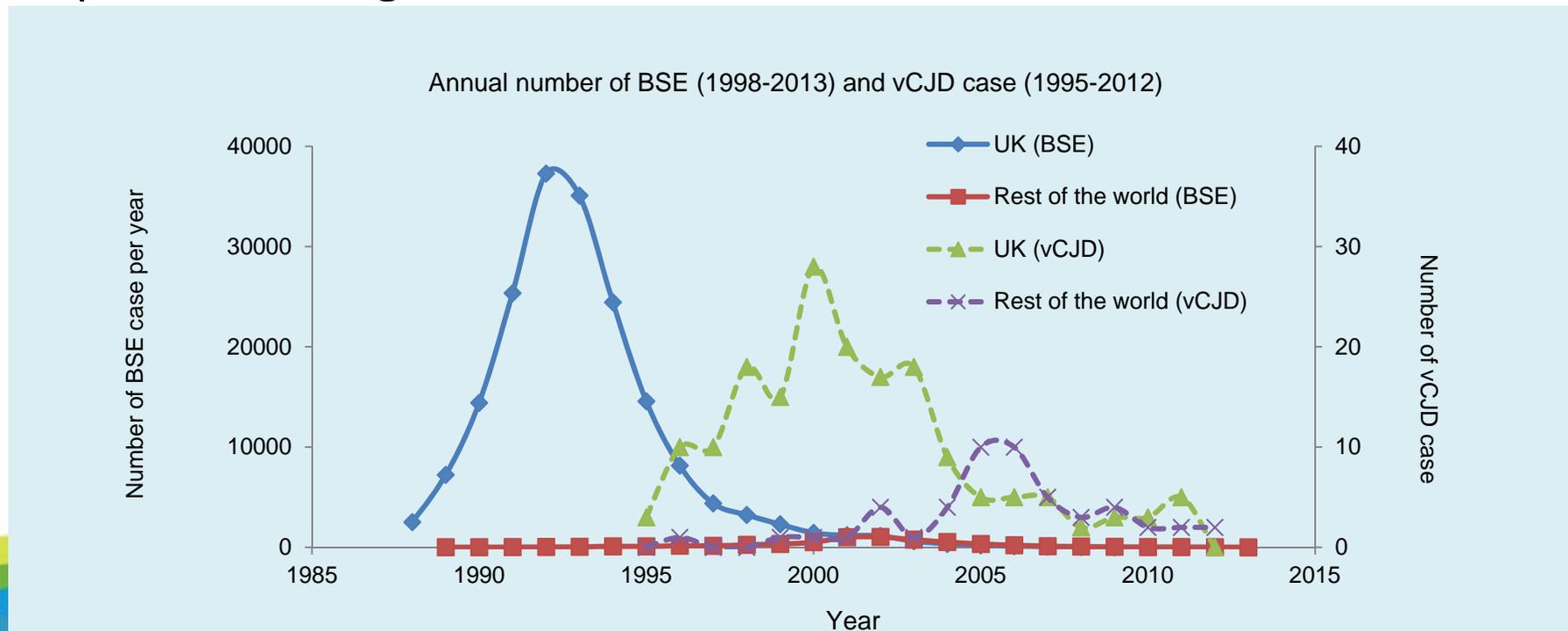
BSE – an infectious disease

- Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) is a transmissible, fatal neurodegenerative disease of cattle.
- The disease, first time recognised in 1986 causes spongiform degeneration of the neural network in the brain and spinal cord of infected cattle leading to incoordination, ataxia and ultimately death of the infected animal.
- The agent causing BSE in cattle is a structurally modified prion protein.
- Variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob's Disease (vCJD), a fatal neurodegenerative human disease described for the first time in 1996, is linked to the consumption of beef or beef products contaminated with the agent that causes BSE in cattle.



BSE – an infectious disease

- The BSE epidemic cost UK an estimated £3.7 billion, 3.3 million UK cattle destroyed
- By March 2014, 228 people have died of vCJD
- Today BSE is no longer a major threat to food and feed safety because of the worldwide prohibition of processed animal proteins being fed to cattle.



Australian Government's BSE food safety Policy

January 2001

- The BSE policy introduced in 2001 banned imports of beef/beef products from all countries which had reported a case of BSE.
- Countries without BSE cases and wishing to export beef/beef products to Australia, were assessed by FSANZ in 2001/2003 for country BSE risk status. As a result, retorted beef products from 27 countries were permitted for import into Australia .
- The *Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code* was amended in 2002, such that beef and beef products sold in Australia must be derived from animals free of BSE.

October 2009

- In view of the updated scientific information on BSE, a new policy effective from 1 March 2010 was announced, which permits imports of beef/beef products from any country that has been assessed by FSANZ for having appropriate BSE controls and being assigned Category 1 or Category 2 country BSE risk status.
- Countries wishing to export fresh or frozen beef to Australia must also undergo an Import Risk Analysis undertaken by the Australian Department of Agriculture which assesses broader animal health and quarantine risks.

Method applied to assess country BSE risk

The Australian method is comprised of an assessment of (based on the information submitted, and those that are publically available)

- the potential of the **release** of the BSE agent in the applicant country via imported commodities
- the extent of the **exposure** of the cattle herds in the applicant country to the BSE agent
- the **food safety controls** placed on beef and beef products produced in the applicant the country
- the **BSE infrastructure and competent authority oversight** of the applicant country
- the **BSE surveillance** of the applicant country
- The above assessments are aided by an **in-country verification inspection** by FSANZ BSE risk assessment personnel, and
- Throughout of the assessment process, comprehensive and timely **risk communication** to our stakeholders.

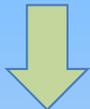
Method applied to assess country BSE risk

Assessment Process

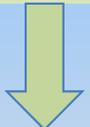
Country Submission



Desk Assessment



In-country Verification



Risk Assessment Report



Country BSE Risk Status
Categorised

Governance and Communication

FSANZ Board

FSANZ CEO

Australian BSE Food
Safety Assessment
Committee

BSE Assessment Team

Notify stakeholders

- Aust Government
- Dept Health
- Dept Agriculture
- Dept Trade
- State and Territory Governments
- New Zealand Government
- Applicant country
- Aust cattle industry
- Aust meat industry
- The OIE
- The general public
- Publication of the full report and assigned risk status on FSANZ website

Method applied to assess country BSE risk

OIE method – assessing animal health	FSANZ method – assessing food safety
Entry assessment	Release assessment
Exposure assessment	Exposure assessment
BSE awareness	BSE awareness
BSE notification and investigation	BSE notification and investigation
BSE diagnosis	BSE diagnosis
BSE surveillance	BSE surveillance

The FSANZ method is based on the OIE method

- ✓
- ✓ With the applicant country
- ✓ With the domestic stakeholders
- ✓ With the general public

- + Food safety controls
- + Cattle identification and traceability
- + In-country verification inspection
- + Transparent risk communication



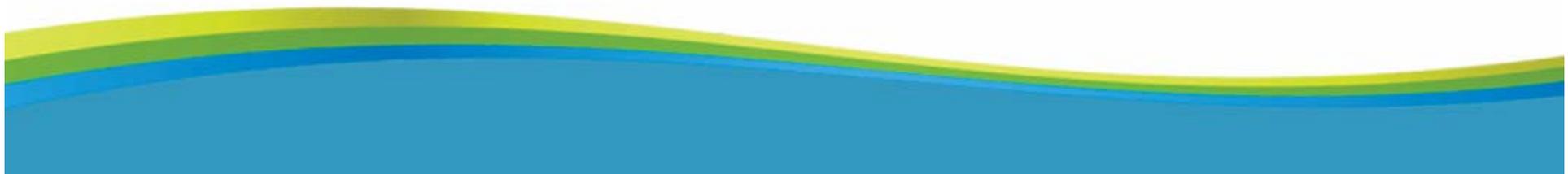
BSE risk status assigned to countries

Category 1 (equivalent to the OIE 'negligible risk')

Minimal likelihood that BSE agent has or will become established in national herd of the applicant country and enter human food chain. Beef and beef products produced in the applicant country regarded as posing minimal risk to human health

Category 2 (equivalent to the OIE 'controlled risk')

Having identified historical risk factors or reported BSE case in the applicant country but these pose minimal risk due to effective implementation of appropriate BSE control measures. Beef and beef products are regarded as posing negligible risk to human health and the residual risk is mitigated through more stringent import certification requirements



Status of assessment of country BSE risk

Country	Assessment status	BSE status assigned by Australia	OIE assigned BSE status
New Zealand	Completed May 2011	Category 1	Negligible (2010)
The Netherlands	Completed Oct 2012	Category 1	Controlled (2012) Negligible (2013)
Croatia	Completed Oct 2012	Category 2	Controlled (2012) Negligible (2014)
Vanuatu	Completed Oct 2012	Category 1	
Latvia	Completed Jul 2013	Category 2 (2013) Category 1 (2014)	Controlled (2013) Negligible (2014)
Lithuania	Completed Jul 2013	Category 1	Controlled (2013)
Chile	Completed Jan 2014	Category 1	Negligible (2014)
Brazil	Completed Mar 2014	Category 1	Negligible (2014)
Mexico	Completion expect Aug 2014		
United States	Completion expect Dec 2014		
Argentina	Completion expect Dec 2014		
Japan	Assessment commenced		
Sweden	Assessment commenced		
Turkey	Assessment to be commenced		

What have we achieved

- ✓ FSANZ has received no adverse consumer or stakeholder feedback in the past 3 years
- ✓ Australian Government Senate Inquiries on the revised BSE food safety policy and process ended in 2013
- ✓ An overall acceptance of the outcomes of the Australia's country BSE assessment by applicant countries
- ✓ No indication of an appreciable level of increase in the import of beef and beef products into Australia as a result of the FSANZ BSE assessment outcome



General observation

The acceptance of a methodology applied to assess a country's risk status for an infectious disease depends upon:

- (1) the general compliance with internationally recognised risk analysis framework;
- (2) conformance to the requirements specified by the applicable policy of the domestic government; and
- (3) Strong risk communications with stakeholders throughout the process and embedded in the methodology.



Thank you for your attention!

