

Beef: identification and registration of bovine animals, labelling of beef and beef products

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In its conclusions of 14 May 1996 the Council declared that TSE (transmissible spongiform encephalopathy) was a public health issue and took the view that all appropriate steps should be taken to eradicate the risk of possible transmission of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy). It considered that there was a need for substantial improvements in the level of cooperation and coordination of research activities and in the exchange of information in this area and therefore called on the Commission to take suitable steps towards achieving this. It also called on the Commission to continue to provide updated information on the research work being carried out under the Fourth Framework Programme and, in particular, to give an account of recent calls for proposals concerning transmissible BSE and its possible link with neuro-degenerative diseases in humans. The Commission was to intensify its research activities in this field to include subject areas such as basic and applied biology, human and animal health and diagnostic procedures, particularly in association with the life science programmes. The Council agreed to look into this question again at the next Research Council meeting (5 December 1996) on the basis of the communication from the Commission, taking into account current research activities, including work under way or being planned in the Member States, and scientific opinion emanating from various expert groups, and in particular from that chaired by Professor Weissman and the Multidisciplinary Scientific Committee.