



# THE ACHIEVEMENT OF BSE NEGLIGIBLE RISK STATUS - LESSONS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

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## COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2025/2208

of 31 October 2025

amending the Annex to Decision 2007/453/EC as regards the BSE status of certain regions of the United Kingdom

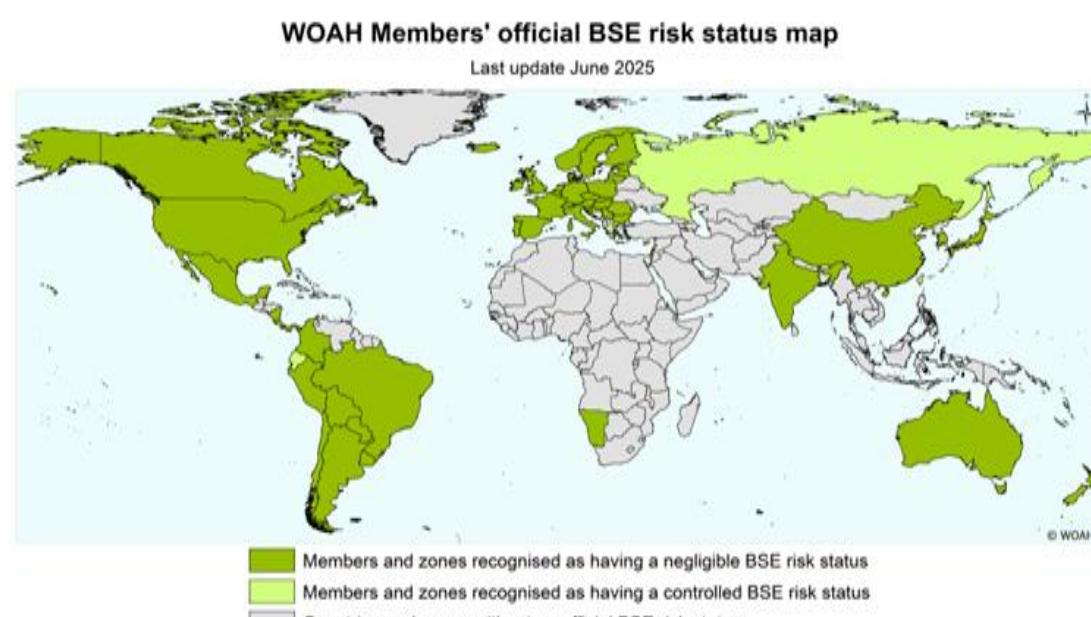
(notified under document C(2025) 7264)

(Text with EEA relevance)

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EU greenlights UK's 'negligible BSE risk' in major win for British beef

5 November 2025 | by FarmingUK Team | Animal Health, Beef, News



"Achieving negligible risk status brings significant benefits – not only cost savings in processing and the ability to utilise more of each carcase, but also greater confidence in the quality and safety of our beef in international markets. It is a major step forward for the UK livestock sector, enhancing its global reputation and potentially unlocking new market opportunities for British beef."

**David Barton, National Farmers' Union Chair**

## Background to the UK BSE crisis

### What is Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)?

BSE is caused by prions, misfolded proteins that induce abnormal brain protein folding causing fatal neurodegeneration in cattle.

#### Economic Impact

BSE crisis cost approximately £3.7 billion.

#### Impact on Livestock and Humans

BSE affected livestock health and was linked to variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans, raising global health concerns.

#### Regulatory Measures

Strict regulations banned meat and bone meal in feed and removed risk materials to control and eradicate BSE.

#### BSE in the UK—Timeline

- 1986 First confirmed case of BSE in UK cattle
- 1980s-90s UK experienced the world's largest BSE outbreak
- 1996 BSE linked to variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD) in humans → worldwide ban on UK exports
- 1990s-2000s UK implemented **stringent control measures**:
  - Feed bans (meat-and-bone meal)
  - Cattle identification and tracing
  - OTM rule
  - SRM removal
  - Surveillance and testing
- 2006 EU lifts UK beef export ban
- 2008 UK BSE Controlled Risk status recognized
- 2025 UK reached Negligible Risk status

## How did the UK achieve BSE negligible risk status?

BSE negligible risk status after nearly 40 years of implementing stringent controls since the first confirmed case. This milestone reflects decades of coordinated effort between government departments and industry to apply and maintain robust measures that reduced the risk to negligible.

UK Government funding for BSE research was pivotal for devising and assuring correct controls. It wasn't just about understanding the disease; it shaped the entire framework for risk management and public health protection.

#### Multi-Agency Collaboration

Cross-government collaboration was essential, involving the UK's Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), the Food Standards Agency (FSA), the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) and industry bodies. Multiple teams and units worked together, including pathology, epidemiology, and surveillance teams.

#### Data-Driven Surveillance

Over eight years of surveillance, feed testing, Animal By-Product inspections, and traceability data were meticulously analyzed, reviewed and quality assured as part of the application.

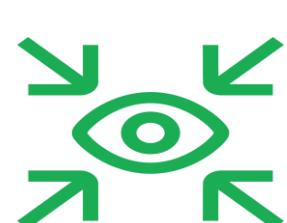
#### Compliance and Risk Management

Preparing the WOAH-compliant dossier showcased intensive alignment with evolving international standards and effective BSE controls.

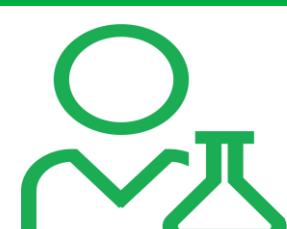
#### One Health Commitment

This achievement highlights the UK's dedication to One Health principles integrating animal, food, and public health sectors and the UK's commitment to transparency.

## APHA's commitment



Continuous Monitoring and Enforcement



Scientific Research and Surveillance



Public Awareness and Stakeholder Engagement



International Collaboration



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