

Penn State Cooperative Extension Capitol Region Dairy Team

MARKET COWS
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Galen Kopp

What do we know about the quality of these animals? As dairy producers, we send our cull cows off to market with very little knowledge of the quality of these critters as well as knowing very little about any drug residues left in them from previous treatments.

At a recent workshop, we as extension educators observed first hand the many issues packers deal with after they receive market (cull) cows at the slaughterhouse.

Every time you cull an animal you are making the same commitment to food safety and quality that you make when you market your milk. Marketing cull dairy cows in better condition, a result of effective monitoring, puts more dollars in your pocket and makes the industry more competitive.

Cows in the 2.5 to 3 body conditions score range produce the most valuable carcasses for beef processing. In addition to losing volume as beef animals, low milk cows that are kept past freshness, or health compromised cows kept until they are overtly biologically broken, are not putting income back into your operation. They are costing you money and taking up space that a more productive animal could be using.

Dairy producers benefit when they view themselves as important contributors of valued beef products, and approach culling as a positive, productive, and profitable function of dairy herd management. Of the value-added beef items growing in popularity with food service distributors and

consumers, products using non-fed beef make the top 10 list every time. These opportunities for increasing market value rely on quality. The same management and culling practices that assure quality beef also make the milking herd more productive and profitable.

Producers should consider the industry's public image and trust when making decisions to keep, treat, or cull dairy cattle. When milk price, facilities, and replacement availability fail to compel timely and voluntary culling decisions, then beef value, farm profits, and the image of the beef and dairy industry all suffer. Most producers see the cows as just milk production, not beef production.

The following are valuable Websites where you can get lots of information and helpful assistance on producing a safe and wholesome beef product:

- www.pabeef.org.
- www.extension.psu.edu.
- www.pa-bqa.org.
- www.pda.state.pa.us.

Economic Ripples Of Canadian BSE Case Felt In Pennsylvania

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Pennsylvania dairy farmers and meat packers will feel the effects of a ban on Canadian cattle imports prompted by the discovery of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) — or mad cow disease — in a cow in the province of Alberta.

Canada exported 1.7 million live cattle to the United States last year, and a significant number of Canadian animals typically end up in Pennsylvania.

"Traditionally, Pennsylvania has imported live cattle from Canada for dairy and beef breeding, as well as for slaughter in meat production," says Larry Hutchinson, extension veterinarian in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Although I know of no meat packer in Pennsylvania that relies solely on Canadian cattle, those that do import from Canada will have to seek other sources of supply until the ban is lifted."

BSE attacks the brain and central nervous system of cattle, leading to weakness, loss of coordination, loss of appetite and eventually death. The disease, which is not contagious, is caused by abnormal proteins — called prions — that are thought to be transmitted through feed containing rendered byproducts of infected animals. BSE has been linked to a similar illness in humans, a variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

The United States has banned imports of cattle and cattle products from countries where BSE is known to exist. No cases of the disease have been found in the United States.

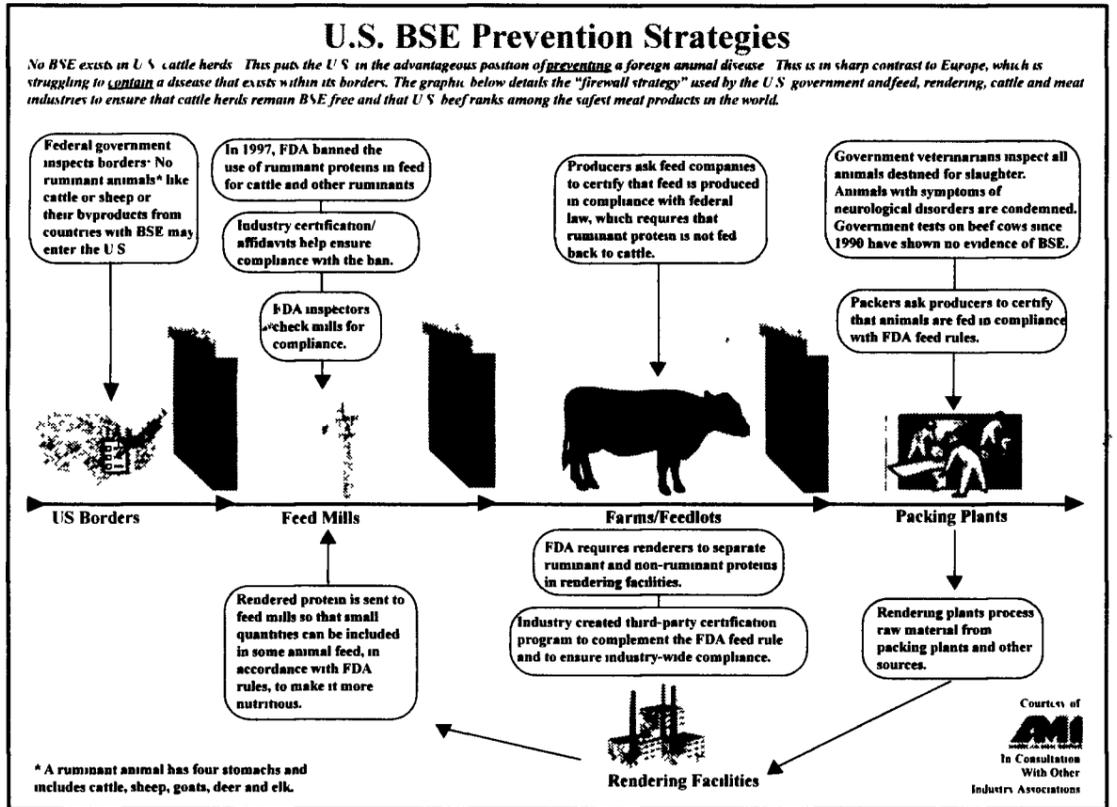
The diagnosis of mad cow disease in Canada is likely to affect retail sales of beef. But Hutchinson says U.S. consumers still can enjoy their steaks and burgers.

"The prions that cause BSE are not present in the muscles of an infected animal, so the meat itself is safe," Hutchinson explains.

"They are in the brain and spinal cord, and it's possible during processing that spinal cord material in particular can contaminate the meat. But consumers in a BSE-free country such as the United States can be well assured that their beef is safe to eat."

In addition to the import restrictions, the United States in 1990 established a herd surveillance program to detect possible cases of mad cow disease. In 1997, the Food and Drug Administration also banned the use of rendered mammalian proteins in cattle feed.

"After more than a decade of close scrutiny, the United States remains BSE-free," says Hutchinson. "But with world trade being so diverse and far-reaching today, we must continue to be vigilant against this and other foreign animal diseases."



2003 PENNSYLVANIA HOLSTEIN ASSOCIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS	AUGUST 1	9:30A M. NORTHWEST CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FAIRGROUNDS NEW CASTLE PA	AUGUST 22	6:00P M. ADAMS COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW SOUTH MOUNTAIN FAIRGROUNDS
JUNE 11 6:30P M. CENTRE/CLINTON HOLSTEIN CLUB PICNIC PAUL DOLLERER & SONS FARM MILL HALL PA	AUGUST 7	10:00A M. WARREN COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS PITTSFIELD PA	AUGUST 23	9:30A M. FRANKLIN COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS CHAMBERSBURG, PA
JUNE 14 7:00P M. SOMERSET COUNTY CLUB PICNIC LAJUCH BROTHERS DAIRY ROCKWOOD PA	AUGUST 7	11:00A M. BUTLER COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FARM SHOW GROUNDS BUTLER PA	AUGUST 26	12:00 NOON CENTRE COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS CENTRE HALL, PA
JUNE 17 7:00P M. SNYDER/UNION TWILIGHT MEETING CLARENCE SHIRK FARM BEAVERTOWN PA	AUGUST 7	6:00P M. MIFFLIN COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS REEDSVILLE PA	AUGUST 29	11:00A M. PA HOLSTEIN HEIFER SALE PA HOLSTEIN FARM, MIDDLETOWN PA
JUNE 21-24 NATIONAL HOLSTEIN CONVENTION ADAMS MARK HOTEL WINSTON SALEM NC	AUGUST 8	10:00A M. WAYNE COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS HONESDALE, PA	SEPTEMBER 23	9:00A M. PA FALL CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FARM SHOW BUILDING, HARRISBURG, PA
JULY 8-9 12:00 NOON PA JUNIOR JUDGING SCHOOL TIOPA COUNTY	AUGUST 8	12:00 NOON CLINTON COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS MAC KEYVILLE PA	SEPTEMBER 24	9:00A M. EAST/CENTRAL HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS, BLOOMSBURG, PA
JULY 9 6:00P M. SOMERSET COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS MEYERSDALE PA	AUGUST 9	9:00A M. TIOPA COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS, WHITNEYVILLE, PA	SEPTEMBER 24-25	EASTERN NATIONAL HOLSTEIN SHOW FARM SHOW BUILDING, HARRISBURG, PA
JULY 10 9:30A M. LYCOMING COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS HUGHESVILLE PA	AUGUST 9	9:30A M. SOUTH CENTRAL CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FAIRGROUNDS SHIPPENSBURG PA	SEPTEMBER 24	7:00P M. EASTERN ELITE ALL-BREED SALE FARM SHOW BUILDING, HARRISBURG, PA
JULY 13 PA HOLSTEIN ASSOCIATION SUMMER PICNIC AND ACTIVITIES BLAIR COUNTY BALLPARK ALTOONA PA	AUGUST 12	9:30A M. HUNTINGDON COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS, HUNTINGDON PA	NOVEMBER 8	11:00A M. NITTANY LION FALL CLASSIC SALE AG ARENA, STATE COLLEGE, PA
JULY 16 11:00A M. LANCASTER COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW SOLANCO FAIRGROUNDS QUARRYVILLE PA	AUGUST 13	KUTZTOWN FAIR HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS, KUTZTOWN, PA	FEBRUARY 6-8	2004 PA JUNIOR HOLSTEIN CONVENTION FOUR POINTS SHERATON INN, GREENSBURG, PA
JULY 17 7:15P M. PERRY COUNTY CLUB PICNIC SAVILLE BROTHERS IN CHRIST CHURCH	AUGUST 14	9:30A M. MONTGOMERY/DELONG FAIR HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS WASHINGTONVILLE, PA	FEBRUARY 19-21	2004 PA HOLSTEIN CONVENTION FOUR POINTS SHERATON INN, GREENSBURG, PA
JULY 21 9:30A M. YORK COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW 4-H CENTER YORK PA	AUGUST 15	11:00A M. BUCKS COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW GRANGE FAIRGROUNDS WRIGHTSTOWN PA		
JULY 23 10:00A M. NORTHAMPTON COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS PLAINFIELD PA	AUGUST 16	11:00A M. WARREN COUNTY HOLSTEIN SALE FAIRGROUNDS PITTSFIELD PA		
JULY 24 SHIPPLINGSBURG FAIR HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS SHIPPENSBURG PA	AUGUST 16	6:00P M. CENTRAL CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FAIRGROUNDS HUNTINGDON PA		
JULY 26 10:00A M. SOUTHWEST CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FAIRGROUNDS UNIONTOWN PA	AUGUST 19	9:30A M. NORTHEAST CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FAIRGROUNDS, WHITNEYVILLE PA		
JULY 31 9:00A M. MORRISONS COVE HOLSTEIN SHOW MEMORIAL PARK MARTINSBURG PA	AUGUST 20	9:30A M. SOUTHEAST CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FAIRGROUNDS LEBANON PA		
JULY 31 9:30A M. NORTHERN HLR CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW FAIRGROUNDS MESSIOPPEN PA	AUGUST 20	10:00A M. PERRY COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS NEWPORT PA		
AUGUST 1 9:00A M. LEBANON COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS LEBANON PA	AUGUST 21	9:00A M. CRAWFORD COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS MEADVILLE PA		
	AUGUST 22	10:00A M. SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY HOLSTEIN SHOW FAIRGROUNDS HARRISBURG PA		

One of our favorite times of year is just around the corner: June Dairy Month! And what a treat we have for Lancaster Farming readers in our June Dairy issue scheduled June 7. Included will be family farm features, breed and association news and highlights, and other great reading for our dairy families.