

Reassessment of feeding animal tallow to ruminants

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The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has reassessed whether feeding animal tallow derived from warm-blooded land animals and fish to ruminants poses an increased BSE risk for consumers.

In Germany, BSE prevention measures go further than the EU specifications: in the European Union, the feeding to ruminants of protein derived from mammals is prohibited since 2001. Germany is the only EU country in which feeding animal tallow to ruminants is prohibited as well.

In their entirety, the BSE protection measures implemented were justified and effective in providing the maximum level of protection for consumers. EU-wide, BSE cases have by now decreased markedly. It is therefore unlikely that animal tallow are contaminated with infectious nerve tissue during harvest. Moreover, the assessment model of the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) has been adjusted and developed further, meaning that in the opinion of the BfR it is now suitable for assessing the situation in Germany as well. In an earlier risk assessment, the BfR had listed shortcomings of the assessment model of EFSA.

On the basis of its scientific risk assessment, the BfR concludes that from the viewpoint of consumer health protection no increased risk for consumers is to be expected from the practice of feeding animal tallow to ruminants.

The full version of this BfR Opinion is available in German on <http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/343/neubewertung-der-verfuetterung-von-tierischem-fett-an-wiederkaeuer.pdf>