

March - BSE Surveillance Program

You probably don't need a reminder about the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) crisis we experienced in the 2000's, however you might need to brush up on the BSE Surveillance Program and your responsibilities as a cattle producer under it.

Canada has been recognized by the World Organization for Animal Health as a BSE controlled risk country since 2007, however we are currently at RISK of losing this status because we are not meeting our 30,000 animal annual testing requirements. If this happens, Canada's status will fall to negligible BSE risk and we may see trading partners close their borders to our Canadian cattle.

So what do you need to do?

When you have an animal older than 30 months (no upper age limit) that you may feel is at risk of BSE, or is down, diseased, dying or dead, call your veterinarian for a BSE test. Prior to 2012 there was an upper age limit on eligible beef animals, however that has been removed.

Your veterinarian will come to your farm FREE OF CHARGE to perform the clinical or post-mortem examination and submit the brainstem samples and appropriate information for testing. In the summer or spring time, it is recommended that samples are collected within 2 days, or one week in the winter, so it is important to let your vet know as soon as possible.

Reimbursements

Currently in Alberta there is a federal (CFIA) reimbursement program of \$75 to the producer per animal that is tested. Prior to September, 15 2011 producers were also eligible for a \$150 provincial incentive for animals tested, however it was discontinued. In light of the lack of sampling occurring, your Alberta Provincial Ag Service Boards have put forth a recommendation to the Alberta Government to reinstate that \$150 incentive in hopes of bringing up the numbers. However, the results of that recommendation are not yet clear.

[Check out this video!](#)