



**Scientific Report of the European Food Safety Authority  
on the Assessment of the Geographical BSE-Risk (GBR) of  
AUSTRALIA.**

Question N° EFSA-Q-2003-083

**Adopted July 2004**

**SUMMARY OF SCIENTIFIC REPORT**

The European Food Safety Authority and its Scientific Expert Working Group on the Assessment of the **Geographical Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Risk (GBR)** were asked by the European Commission (EC) to provide an up-to-date scientific report on the GBR in Australia, i.e. the likelihood of the presence of one or more cattle being infected with BSE, pre-clinically as well as clinically, in Australia. This scientific report addresses the GBR of Australia as assessed in 2004 based on data covering the period 1980-2003.

In the case of Australia, an extremely or very unstable system was exposed to a very low or negligible challenge through the import of cattle. Under these conditions, it is highly unlikely that any internal challenge occurred. Given the negligible level of external challenge through meat and bone meal (MBM), it is highly unlikely that any internal challenge occurred.

The risk that BSE-infected cattle entered processing in Australia and were, at least partly, rendered for feed, due to imported cattle from BSE-risk countries has been very low to negligible throughout the considered period. Some imports of cattle in the early 80s from the UK and from the mid-80s onwards from USA, Canada and European countries increased the risk of BSE infectivity entering the feed chain. However, the probability that BSE contaminated material entered processing is seen as being very low.

EFSA concludes that **the current GBR Australia** level is *1*, i.e., *it is highly unlikely* that domestic cattle are (clinically or pre-clinically) infected with the BSE-agent. As long as the possibility of cross-contamination exists and there are no serious changes in rendering, the system will continue to be very unstable. Thus, the possibility of cattle being (pre-clinically or clinically) infected with the BSE-agent will remain at a low level.

**Key words: BSE, geographical risk assessment, GBR, Australia, third countries**