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**OIE Endorses BSE Controlled Risk Status for U.S.**

The World Organization for Animal Health's (OIE) scientific commission has endorsed the recommendation from an OIE expert panel that the United States should be classified as "controlled risk" for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), according to a statement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

"This recommendation provides strong support that U.S. regulatory controls are effective and that U.S. cattle and products from cattle of all ages can be safely traded in accordance with international guidelines, due to our interlocking safeguards," said Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) administrator Ron DeHaven, DVM.

USDA submitted an application and supporting documents to OIE to formally request country classification for BSE risk in October 2006. Prior to recommending a risk classification, the OIE undertakes a thorough review process and then provides an opportunity for all delegate countries to review the recommendations and present comments prior to final adoption of a country's classification in May.

"We are gratified that the OIE's scientific commission recognizes the proactive efforts the U.S. undertook long before our first case of BSE was diagnosed," said AMI Foundation President James H. Hodges.

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