

Canada's Feed Bans and By-Products

Discussion Document

October 2010

Since 1997, the feed bans implemented in Canada have implied changes in what by-products from cattle can be used for. This document looks at those feed bans and their implications for by-product usage. It should be noted that the US is working on a short list of Specified Risk Material (SRM) versus the long list SRM which is in place in Canada. The main point is that the long list is applicable to cattle over-30-months of age (OTM) only and therefore has little impact on by-products coming from youthful cattle.

First a clarification on Canada's feed ban's and their implications:

- Canada's first feed ban was implemented in 1997. This made it illegal to feed ruminant Meat and Bone Meal (MBM) back to ruminants, although its use in fertilizer, poultry, pig and pet food was allowed.
- In 2003, all brain and spinal cord material from under-30-months of age (UTM) and OTM cattle were removed from the human food chain (but still could be used in fertilizer as well as pet, poultry and hog feed).
- In 2007, Canada's Enhanced Feed Ban banned the use of SRM in fertilizer as well as pet, poultry and hog feed. This SRM must be segregated at the packing plant, and is all being rendered in Calgary and shipped to a landfill in Coronation.
- All three of these levels of animal health protection are still in effect today

On July 12, 2007 the enhanced feed ban required the separation of SRM from animal feed, pet food, and fertilizer. It also prohibits the export and use of SRM in food for human consumption.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) defines Specified Risk Material (SRM) as:

- The skull, brain, trigeminal ganglia (nerves attached to the brain), eyes, tonsils, spinal cord, dorsal root ganglia in the vertebral column (nerves attached to the spinal cord) of cattle 30 months and older (research has shown that these tissues, in younger cattle under 30 months do not contain the infective agent). This is the long list.
- The distal ileum (portion of the small intestine) from cattle of all ages
- Source: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anim/disemala/bseesb/enhren/enhrene.shtml>

Note: the largest cost of the enhanced feed ban is on OTM cattle which includes not only the lost value in not selling these items but also the cost of disposal. It also means that all rendering from the dirty side of the packing plant (before the carcass wash) which is susceptible to contamination from incidental OTM animals is considered SRM and cannot be sold for animal feed, fertilizer, or pet food.

It is important to note is that 80% of Canadian cattle slaughter is from youthful cattle under 30 months which only require the distal ileum to be removed. This means that the impact on how by-products can be used would actually be minimal. Other non-SRM items such as rawhide can still be used in things like pet chews. And the rest of the intestine (excluding the distal ileum) can be used in inedible products like tennis racquet strings and instrument strings.

It is not necessarily that the enhanced feed ban makes beef by-products unusable for these things but that synthetic products may be replacing them. For example, there is nothing in the enhanced feed ban that would indicate that bone cannot be used in China. However, the question becomes is there still a

demand for this product or is china being made of other things. While cattle by-products can be and have in the past been used for all sorts of things, these by-products are constantly changing as one market disappears and another develops. There is research constantly being done to find safe ways of using SRM instead of just disposing of it, which will bring value back to the industry.

Animal feed and fertilizer can still be made but only applies to non-SRM material since SRM can no longer be used in those products. Note animal feed in this situation would be poultry and hog feed as the ruminant to ruminant feed ban of 1997 prevents any MBM from ruminants being fed to ruminants.

Hormones like thyrotropin which originate in the brain (in the pituitary) are still usable from youthful cattle but since they are SRM from OTM cattle is disposed of.

The reference piece from 2000 is largely accurate when keeping in mind the above exception such as no sausage casings are made from the distal ileum, and no animal feed or fertilizer is made from SRM.

The point to stress here for consumers is that no SRM is entering the human food chain. Really you could continue presenting the information as you have in the past but when the question arises about the enhanced feed ban to be aware of what is not being used in by-products - that being SRM specifically the distal ileum from all cattle. Everything else can be used from youthful cattle.