



IDAHO CATTLE
ASSOCIATION



NEWS RELEASE

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IDAHOANS ENCOURAGED TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR BEEF INDUSTRY DURING HOLIDAY WEEKEND

BSE results prove American beef remains safe for consumers

(BOISE) The Idaho State Department of Agriculture, Idaho Cattle Association and the Idaho Beef Council joined together Monday to encourage Idahoans to show their support for the quality, safety and goodness of American beef this holiday weekend.

ISDA Director Pat Takasugi said the discovery of bovine spongiform encephalopathy following testing in Weybridge, England serves as a reminder that U.S. beef is safe to eat. Since June 2004, the U.S. BSE Enhanced Surveillance Program has tested more than 394,000 targeted animals considered most susceptible to this disease and has found only one case. This confirms that the likelihood of this disease in the U.S. cattle population is extremely low.

"The real story here is that there is no story," said Takasugi. "The animal that was tested at Weybridge never entered the human food or animal feed supply. Therefore, there is no public health concern whatsoever. What we get out of this experience is a chance to remind consumers about our testing efforts, about how safe of our food supply is and to review that the appropriate checks and balances are in place."

"The cattle industry has been doing its part to make sure the beef that reaches the dinner table is the best anywhere, not only because of its quality, but because of the safety protocols and animal identification systems we're using," said of the Idaho Cattle Association President Ernie Robinson of New Meadows. "We will continue to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Idaho State Department of Agriculture to be world leaders when it comes to programs that protect and benefit consumers."

"We're proud of the beef industry in Idaho," said Tim Shaw of Cascade, chairman of the Idaho Beef Council. "We're so confident in the protections and systems in place, that I plan to enjoy a steak with my family during the Independence Day weekend, and I hope other Idahoans will, too."

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