

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0163/01

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to the Commission

Subject: Mad cow disease

The press is providing information on mad cow disease which is fairly comprehensive from a technical point of view, but which is incomplete from an institutional point of view.

This serious disease is not a new one, but it is only now that it is beginning to receive the attention it deserves, riding on the wave of emotion that has been aroused.

There is no scientific certainty as regards the long incubation period, the age of the cattle at risk, the inter-country movement of cattle and the effects on beef and dairy products.

Can the Commission therefore state:

1. what research investments have been made since the phenomenon first came to light (1985);
2. what degree of certainty there is with regard to the monitoring of meat movements both within the EU and in third countries;
3. what degree of certainty there is with regard to possible BSE-related human mortality over the past 15 years;
4. whether the precautions implemented by the Member States are deemed adequate on the basis of the information currently available;
5. whether it does not consider it would be appropriate to promptly step up scientific research, even if this means using unlimited resources.