

Korea's BSE Control System and National Status in OIE

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The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) held a Central Animal Disease Control Council Meeting on September 26 with the participation of relevant experts including presidents of livestock and consumer associations and scholars. It was for the collection of opinions and for applying to OIE for the promotion of a national status for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease) on September 27th to acquire 'BSE Negligible Risk' status in 2014. The Central Animal Disease Control Council has established under control of the MAFRA to offer advice on principal policies related to animal disease control, in accordance with Article 4 of Act on the Prevention of Contagious Animal Diseases.

OIE will make a decision on Korea's application for national status promotion through evaluations by special review groups and the Science Committee at its General Meeting on May 2014. OIE BSE status is categorized into 1) Negligible risk, 2) Controlled risk and 3) Undetermined risk. Since 'Controlled Risk' was acquired from OIE in 2010, the Korean government has been making efforts to strengthen prohibitions on the provision of animal protein fodder to ruminants and continuously implementing surveillance to comply with OIE standards and prevent outbreaks of BSE. According to OIE standards, the Korea government has 1) achieved 410,000 points, which is higher than the seven-year BSE surveillance criteria of 300 points, 2) complied with the prohibition action on the provision of animal protein fodder to ruminants for eight years and 3) have been providing BSE education. The Korean government applied to OIE for national BSE status promotion to confirm that Korea's BSE control system is in compliance with the 'Negligible Risk' status conditions.

The MAFRA has been operating a BSE Control Team (TF team) since February of 2013 for national BSE status promotion. In May, the Korea delegation expressed their intention to increase the national BSE status to the OIE Secretary General at the OIE General Meeting in Paris, France. The Korean government expects that if Korea's application for 'Negligible Risk' status is accepted, this will contribute to future beef exports and create an opportunity for Korea's animal disease control system to be recognized internationally.

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