



Organic Farmers & Growers

Guidance Notes for Completing OF&G BSE Declaration and Audit forms.

The UKROFS Standards require that all animals at risk from BSE be eliminated from organic beef and dairy cattle herds. These Guidance Notes are written to help farmers comply with this requirement by explaining how to trace animals in order to prove that they are not BSE cohorts or 1st generation offspring

All farmers with cattle, who are applying for organic certification with OF&G, must complete the BSE Declaration and Audit forms, (both attached here), to the satisfaction of the OF&G Certification Office, before their cattle enterprise can be certified. For any animals considered to be At risk of BSE infection, the BSE Information Request form must also be completed.

For farms/units in Simultaneous Conversion, any At-risk cattle must be removed and the BSE Audit form and Declaration completed, signed and sent to OF&G Certification Office within 6 months of the start of the conversion period.

How to complete the BSE Declaration and Audit forms

If your holding has not had a case of BSE, tick the NO box for questions 1 and 2 of the Declaration form (p.3) and go to Question 3.

If your holding has had a case of BSE, tick the YES box for question 1 in the Declaration form and complete section 1 of the Audit form (p.4&5) with details of ALL the BSE cases that have occurred on your farm.

Give details of any 1st generation offspring or cohorts of cases that have occurred on your holding, including dates of removal from the holding, in section 2 of the Audit form.

If there are any 1st generation offspring and cohorts still on the farm, tick the YES box to question 2 of the Declaration form and arrange for any remaining offspring and cohorts to be removed as soon as possible.

If all the 1st generation offspring and cohorts have been removed from the farm, tick the NO box to question 2 of the Declaration form. Go to the next question.

Have you brought-in any cattle? If so, tick YES to question 3 on the Declaration form. List all the animals that are presently on the farm that have been brought-in on section 3 of the Audit form.

If you have pedigree animals from a breed that has never had BSE, and you have a letter stating this from the Breed Society, you can tick YES to question 4 on the Declaration form and enter N in the At-risk? column on the Audit form for animals registered with that breed society.

Animals born since 01/08/96, which have a passport and are brought directly from the farm on which they were born, are considered to be not-at-risk. Enter N in the At-risk? column on the Audit form. Question 5 on the Declaration form (p. 3) can be ticked as YES.

Further information is required for animals brought directly from the farm on which they were born (Natal farm) but born before 01/08/96. Please send the BSE Information Request form (p.6 & 7) to the farmer who bred and reared them.

Animals brought through a market or dealer from the farm on which they were born can be treated as above.

Animals that have been brought from a unit other than the one on which they were born must have the BSE Information Request form completed for all the units on which they have been kept.

The BSE Information Request form (p. 6 & 7) must be completed for all animals being investigated. (These are animals for which Yes has been ticked in the At risk? column of the Audit form.) When this form has been completed, keep the original and send a copy with the BSE Declaration and Audit form to OF&G at Shrewsbury.

What to do if you don't know where your animals came from.

Check your movement book to see when they were brought-in. Enter this in Section 3 of the Audit form. The place you bought the animals from should be listed in your movement book and their records may help you trace where the animal came from.

If you still cannot trace the farm on which the animals were born then you can contact your local DEFRA Animal Health Office (Divisional Veterinary Office in Northern Ireland) who will assist you in the tracing of the present herd number owner. The BSE information request form can then be sent to the present herd number owner to be completed, either by you or your regional DEFRA Animal Health Office. The herd number may be discontinued or have changed hands in which case you may be unable to obtain the necessary information. Unfortunately, if you cannot obtain all the information required, these animals will have to be removed from the holding.

Definitions

BSE - Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy.

1st generation offspring - all calves born to a cow that later developed BSE.

Cohort - an animal born within 3 months of another animal that later develops BSE, or having received the same concentrate feed pre-weaning as an animal that later developed BSE.

Intermediate farm/unit - a farm or unit, other than the farm/unit on which the animal was born, on which the animal being investigated has spent more than 24 hours.

Natal farm - the farm/unit on which the animal was born.

Passport - the passport issued to all cattle born since 01/08/96 as part of the DEFRA Cattle Tracing Scheme.

Pre-weaning - the period when a calf is still taking milk as part of its diet.

UKROFS - United Kingdom Register of Organic Food Standards.