

**ACTION ALERT**  
**December 29, 2003**

**BSE Meat Recall Update**

The United States Department of Agriculture yesterday expanded the number of states where recalled meat, from Verns Moses Lake Meats in Washington State may have been distributed to include Oregon, Washington, Nevada, California, Alaska, Montana, Hawaii, Idaho and Guam. USDA once again said, "the recall was initiated out of an abundance of caution and we remain confident in the safety of these beef products."

USDA announced a Class II recall on December 23 for Verns Moses Lake Meats in Moses Lake, Washington based on a presumptive positive test for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) on a single dairy cow, that has since been confirmed by the BSE world reference lab in Waybridge, England.

Approximately twenty carcasses were processed December 9, 2003 on the day the cow was tested. The quantity recalled is approximately 10,410 pounds of meat that was produced on December 9, 2003, shipped to Midway Meats in Centralia Washington for deboning on December 12 and then distributed by two federally inspected plants- Willamette Valley Meats in Portland, and Interstate Meat Distributors on Clackamas, Oregon. [If you are a customer, the contact at Verns Moses Lakes Meats is Tom Ellestad, Secretary, 509-765-4184. If you have questions about recall procedures call USDA FSIS Recall Management, 202-690-6389.]

You can inform and reassure associates, customers and the media in a number of ways: 1) your source of supply is not from one of the affected companies; 2) if it is, determine whether or not you received the recalled product; 3) If you have, ask for return of any recalled products; 4) It is important to stress that USDA classified the recall a Class II (low health risk) because the tissues known to contain the BSE agent (meaning the brains, spinal cord, and distal ileum) were all removed at the Verns facility during the slaughter that occurred December 9. According to Dr. Ken Peterson of USDA, "Because the meat leaving Verns did not contain these high risk material, the recalled beef represents an essentially zero risk to consumers." Consumers can also call the USDA hotline at 1-888-674-6854. Consumer Question and Answers about BSE are available from the Food and Drug Administration: [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/bsefaq.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/bsefaq.html).

USDA is continuing its investigation and is focusing on tracing the other 73 head of cattle that came into the United States or appear to have come into the United States with the indexed or positive cow. At this time there is no indication of any BSE related problems with the other cattle. Additional BSE Information and Updates are being posted daily on the USDA website: [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov). The recall notice is

If you have questions or need additional information contact Tom Wenning, N.G.A., Senior Vice President and General Counsel at (703) 516-0700.

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If you have questions or need additional information, contact Tom Wenning at [publicaffairs@nationalgrocers.org](mailto:publicaffairs@nationalgrocers.org).

Would you prefer to receive Action and Recall Alerts via e-mail? E-mail us at [publicaffairs@nationalgrocers.org](mailto:publicaffairs@nationalgrocers.org).

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