

[BSE: The Ruminant Empire Strikes Back](#)

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HEALING

## BSE: The Ruminant Empire Strikes Back

Containment efforts for "Mad Cow Disease" fail to curb spread of the incurable illness

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We have previously discussed Great Britain's epidemic of bovine spongiform encephalopathy. BSE--"Mad Cow Disease"--belongs to the class of TSE's (transmissible spongiform encephalopathy) that also infect other ruminant animals, such as reindeer, elk, and in the lamb as scrapie. Herds in Great Britain have been scrutinized and thousands of cattle burned in an attempt to stop the disease's spread. There has also been a ruling passed that no cattle feed should contain remnants of other animals which may carry the disease, specifically sheep, who may have scrapie. In spite of this, diseased cattle have been shipped to Europe, where officials believe there are more cases of BSE than are reported. According to Reuters, there are 214 reported cases in Ireland, 230 in Switzerland, 58 in Portugal, 27 in France, 5 in Germany, 2 in Netherlands and Italy and one in Denmark. It is undeterminable how many cases are not reported. Europe also has a trade in meat and bone meal, which is the ground bone and rendered leftovers from the slaughtering of cattle--so nerve tissue, which carries the infective agent, is also getting

into the food stream.

Sixteen cases of Creutzfeldt-Jakob diseases--now called variant CJD--have been reported in Britain. Unanimous opinion says these cases resulted from eating infected beef. There is a serious problem containing the diseased animals, partially because there is no good way to diagnose the condition until symptoms appear. An unscrupulous herder may allow a diseased animal to enter the food chain without reporting the illness. Governmental agencies are not equipped to inspect every bit of feed for its compliance to the regulations.

This is serious to the entire world, as there is no cure or treatment for BSE or CJD. It is always fatal. Any nation that has imported cattle from Britain in the past ten years may have BSE lying latent in the herds. Through ignorance of the disease and its manifestations, some sick animals may enter the food stream. Transmission through bovine gelatin (a protein obtained from animal skin, bones and tissues) is also possible. There is apparently no way to sterilize gelatin, which is used in so many food products. The UK has banned shipping gelatin to Europe; however it is still being imported to the USA and possibly other countries. There is no proof that gelatin can transport the disease, but there is also no proof that it cannot. Bovine tissue that is most likely to transmit the disease includes brain, spinal cord and nerves. Although these need not enter the feed or food stream, it has happened because of the methods of slaughter which allow fragments to scatter and be picked up in the meat stream. Officials are very dogmatic about BSE's not being in the USA flocks. The FDA has recently revised its rules regarding ruminant feed. It does not allow the feed to contain animal protein from mammalian sources.

However, this is just for ruminant feed, as they believe that hogs are not subject to this disease. What is to prevent accidental mixing of the feed?

To prevent the possibility of CJD, it seems obvious that we should all stop eating meat and follow a purely vegetarian diet as told by the rishis of old. There is no good evidence that milk is able to transmit the disease, contrary to prior belief.

Dr. Tandavan, 77, retired nuclear physician and hospital staff president, lives in Chicago, where he specializes in alternative healing arts. Visit his home page at the [Hinduism Today Website](#).