

February 2004

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### Dates to Remember

#### February

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>5</b>        | NW FL Beef Conference - Marianna, FL                                    |
| <b>5&amp;9</b>  | FL State Fair: Open Beef Shows - Tampa, FL                              |
| <b>6&amp;10</b> | FL State Fair: Youth Beef Shows - Tampa, FL                             |
| <b>10</b>       | Florida Ag Hall of Fame Induction Banquet - Tampa, FL                   |
| <b>7</b>        | FL State Fair: 4-H Day - Tampa, FL                                      |
| <b>7</b>        | FL State Fair: 4-H Horse Judging - Tampa, FL                            |
| <b>7</b>        | FL State Fair: 4-H Livestock Judging - Tampa, FL                        |
| <b>10</b>       | FL State Fair: Youth Steer Showmanship - Tampa, FL                      |
| <b>11</b>       | FL State Fair: Youth Steer Show - Tampa, FL                             |
| <b>11</b>       | USDA-NRCS Florida Listening Session for Public Comment - Ft. Pierce, FL |
| <b>20-23</b>    | Alachua County Youth Fair & Livestock Show - Gainesville, FL            |
| <b>24</b>       | Winter Forage Program Field Day & Tour - Ona, FL                        |
| <b>27</b>       | Livestock Judging Contest - Chipley, FL                                 |

### Prepared by Extension Specialists in Animal Sciences

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*Beef Cattle Nutrition, Gainesville*

#### March

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>1</b>    | Livestock Judging Contest - Orlando, FL             |
| <b>3-4</b>  | West Florida Livestock Show & Sale - Quincy, FL     |
| <b>9-10</b> | FCA Legislative Quarterly Meeting - Tallahassee, FL |
| <b>13</b>   | State 4-H Hippology Contest - Orlando, FL           |
| <b>25</b>   | NFREC Beef Cattle Field Day - Marianna, FL          |



First foal of the year born at the University of Florida's Horse Research Center at 1:00 am on Monday, January 26, 2004. This photo was taken of him at approximately 8 hours of age. Photo courtesy of Steve Vargas, Farm Manager, University of Florida Horse Research Center.



## Beef Management Calendar

### February

- Top dress winter forages, if needed.
- Check and fill mineral feeders.
- Put bulls out with breeding herd.
- Work calves (identify, implant with growth stimulant, vaccinate, etc.).
- Make sure lactating cows are receiving an adequate level of energy.
- Watch calves for signs of respiratory diseases.
- Cull cows that failed to calve while prices are seasonally up.
- Check for lice and treat if needed.

### March

- Prepare land for summer crops.
- Begin grazing warm season permanent pastures.
- Check and fill mineral feeder.
- Observe bulls for condition and success. Rotate and rest if needed.
- Deworm cows as needed.
- Make sure calves are healthy and making good weight gains.
- Hang forced-use dust bags by April 1st for external parasite control or use insecticide impregnated ear tags.
- Identify, vaccinate, implant, and work late calves.
- Put bulls out March 1st for calving season to start December 9.
- Remove bulls March 22<sup>nd</sup> to end calving season January 1.

### April

- Plant warm season annual pastures.
- Plant corn for silage.
- Check and fill mineral feeder.
- Check dust bags or apply treated ear tags.
- Check for external parasites and treat if necessary.
- Observe cows for repeat breeders.
- Deworm cows as needed if not done in March.
- Vaccinate against blackleg and brucellosis after 3 months of age and before 12 months of age.

- Market cull cows and bulls.
- Update market information and refine market strategy for calves.



## Livestock Summary

Domestic and export demand for beef, particularly higher quality, has remained strong since 2000. Consequently, beef prices have been on a record pace since mid-winter because of reduced cattle supplies that were further tightened by poor winter feeding conditions.

Unfavorable forage conditions since 1998 have not helped herd expansion, although feed grain prices have remained moderate. Cow and heifer slaughter has remained high through October 2003 because of these continued poor forage conditions in many areas.

A shift toward expansion could occur with the 2004 breeding season if forage supplies improve, cow slaughter declines, and a larger number of heifers are bred. Even if all of these events occur, beef production will not begin to expand until as early as 2006.

The fed cattle supply situation became even tighter in the fall quarter of 2003, with boxed beef prices rising in October, up 58 percent from a year ago. These retail beef prices are likely to continue on a record-setting path as high prices are passed on to consumers.

The USDA issued a proposed rule on October 31 to establish a new category of regions that present a minimal risk of introducing Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy into the United States via the importation of certain low-risk live ruminants and their byproducts. This proposed rule has a 60-day comment period, after which the USDA will evaluate all suggestions before issuing a final rule.

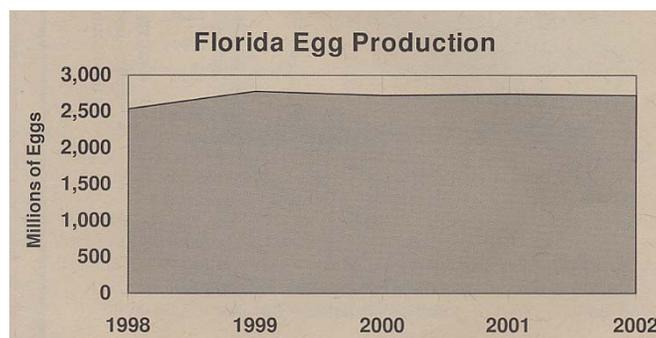
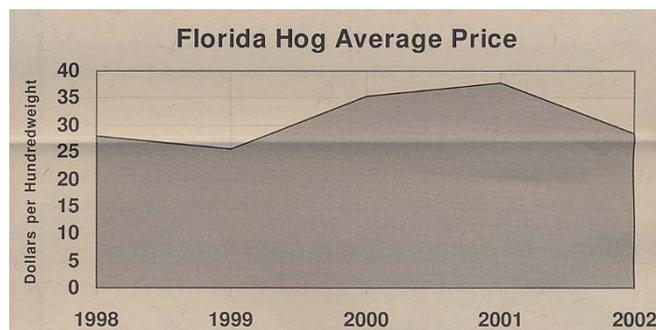
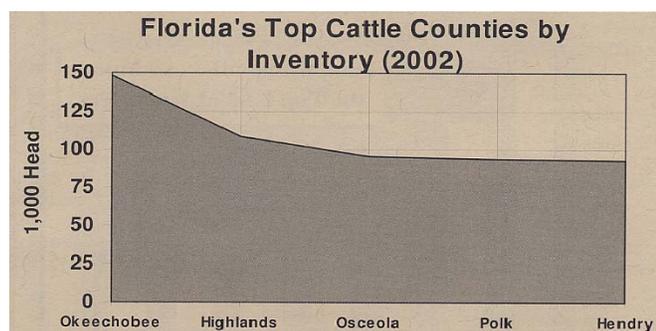
Although feedlot placements rose sharply this summer, feeder cattle supplies are already down. This year's calf crop is expected to be at 38 million head, the smallest since 1951.

Until cow slaughter begins to decline and more heifers are retained, the calf crop will continue to decline. The loss of feeder cattle imports from Canada further tightens the supply situation and it will remain very tight over the next couple of years.

Increased domestic supplies are simply not biologically possible until 2006, unless something happens to force increased herd liquidation. However, improved moisture conditions this fall have helped to reduce drought areas.

Weather conditions through spring and improved grazing conditions in 2004 will be key factors in providing the foundation for the beginning stages of herd expansion. Florida's cow/calf operators are in a wait-and-see mode as weather conditions and the situation in Canada will have a big impact on their future.

### Livestock Trends



**SOURCE:** The Florida Agri-Journal  
 Researched by Tony Young  
 Marketing Specialist I  
 Division of Marketing  
 Release - December 5, 2003

-RSS-

## Beef Cattle Field Day

**Thursday, March 25, 2004**  
**North Florida REC**  
**Marianna Beef Unit, Marianna, FL**

To register or for more information, please contact Gary Hansen at (850)482-1243 or by email at GRHansen@ifas.ufl.edu or Bob Myer at (850) 482-9955 or by email at BMyer@ifas.ufl.edu.

### Tentative Program

#### Morning Program - Moderator: Doug Mayo

- 8:00 AM Registration \*
- 8:15 Welcome - Glen Hembry
- 8:30 - Concurrent Presentations/  
 Noon Demonstrations
- 1) Update of Reproduction Technologies - Gary Hansen
  - 2) Crop and Grazing Rotations - Dallas Hartzog
  - 3) Cool Season Forages - Ann Blount
  - 4) Supplemental Feeding - Bob Myer/John Arthington
  - 5) Cow Productivity - Jeff Carter/Ronnie Hartzog
- 12:00 - Lunch and Beef Industry Update -  
 1:30 PM Roger West

#### Afternoon Program - Moderator: Gary Hansen

- 1:30 - Concurrent Presentations/  
 3:00 Demonstrations
- 1) Tour of Forage Research Plots - Ann Blount
  - 2) Animal Identification - Steve Blackburn, Allflex
- Optional - Self Tours of Beef Unit  
 (map will be provided)
- 3:00 PM Adjourn

\*Registration fee of \$5.00 per person will be charged to help defray the cost of lunch, refreshments, and publication costs of the proceedings.



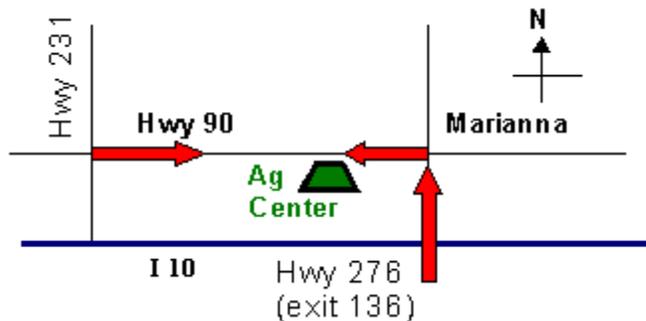
## NW Florida Beef Conference to Feature Breeding Management

The 13<sup>th</sup> annual Northwest Florida Beef Conference and Trade Show will focus on Breeding Herd Management. Ranchers will also have the opportunity to meet representatives from companies that provide products and services to the cattle industry in the region at the trade show held through out the morning session. The Beef Conference will be held in Marianna on Thursday, February 5 at the Jackson County Agriculture Center. The trade show will open at 8:00 AM Central Time with the program getting underway at 9:00. Lunch will also be provided.

The program will feature speakers discussing herd management practices that affect reproduction. Reproduction is the number one factor that affects the profitability of a beef herd. The only way to make money from the cows you keep is if they produce a calf each year. Topics for discussion will include: The value of a breeding season, the best time of year to calve, crossbreeding and the type of breeds that should be used, how to manage for fertility and feeding the herd to improve reproduction. More specific information on the Conference is available on the web at <http://jackson.ifas.ufl.edu>.

The Beef Conference is an annual event sponsored by University of Florida Extension and allied industry representatives. If you would like more information on the program or on exhibiting at the trade show, contact Doug Mayo at the Jackson County Extension Office (850) 482-9620.

### Directions to the Beef Conference:



Travel to Marianna and exit Interstate 10 at State Road 276 (exit 20) and travel North 2 miles to Highway 90; turn West (left) on Highway 90 and go 2 miles. The Ag Center will be marked with a green sign and will be on the South (left) side of the road.

**SOURCE:** Jackson County Extension  
<http://jackson.ifas.ufl.edu/>

-MJH-



## Winter Forage Program Field Day & Tour

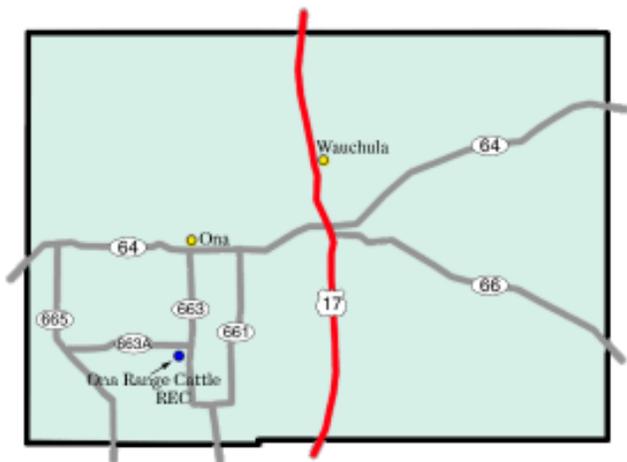
**Tuesday, February 24, 2004**  
**Range Cattle REC**  
**Ona, FL**

### AM

- 8:00-8:30 Walk-in Registration & Coffee
- 9:00 Brief Introduction - Martin B. Adjei
- 9:05 Establishment, Management, Performance of Cool Season Varieties - ryegrass, small grains, tall fescue, white and red clovers - Paul Mislevy/Martin Adjei
- 10:00 Field-Scale Methods for Successful Ryegrass Establishment - Rob Kalmbacher
- 10:30 Management of Early Weaned Calves on Ryegrass Pasture - John D. Arthington
- 11:30 Cost Analysis of Ryegrass Establishment on South Florida Pastureland - Tom E. Anton
- 12:05 Adjourn

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Directions: From SR 64, travel to Ona and turn south on County Road 663 at caution light. Travel 5 miles on 663 and turn right on Goose Pond Road. Travel 1.5 miles and turn left on CR 663A to the office which is on the left.



**SOURCE:** Martin B. Adjei  
Forage Agronomist  
Range Cattle REC  
Ona, FL  
mbadjei@mail.ifas.ufl.edu  
(863) 735-1314

-MJH-

## New FDA Rules on Feed Win Praise from AMI

The Food and Drug Administration has published new rules to bolster prevention of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, including bans on feeding mammalian blood to calves, the use of downer cattle, and high-risk material such as brain and spinal cord tissue in FDA-regulated products.

In addition, FDA is prohibiting the feeding of poultry litter and restaurant scraps to cattle and has banned using dead or disabled cows to make products for people like dietary supplements, cosmetics, or soups and other foods with traces of meat.

The rules will take effect in a few days, as soon as they are published in The Federal Register, a spokesman for the agency said. The quick start of the rules after their announcement is a departure from the usual, deliberative process.

Tommy G. Thompson, the secretary of the Health and Human Services Department, the parent of the food and drug agency, called the rules "a giant step forward."

It is widely believed that contaminated feed ignited

the mad cow epidemic in Britain during the 1980s. Scientists suspect that feed can transmit the disease if it includes bone meal or other material rendered from the carcasses of sick cows, particularly the brain and spinal cord. The United States banned the use of rendered cattle in cattle feed in 1997 but has continued to let producers feed cow blood to calves as a milk substitute.

FDA's announcement was lauded by AMI President J. Patrick Boyle, who noted the new rules go beyond what is called for under the Office of International Epizootics (OIE) guidelines for countries that have identified a single case of BSE.

"FDA's announcement clearly strengthens existing feed restrictions," Boyle said. "It is our view that feed controls are an important line of defense in preventing BSE. With a greater than 99 percent level of compliance with existing feed restrictions, the highest level of compliance with any FDA rule, the new and aggressive actions will create an extraordinarily high level of assurance that U.S. cattle are protected from the risk of BSE."

**SOURCE:** Daniel Yovich  
<http://www.meatingplace.com>  
Release - January 28, 2004

-MJH-

## USDA Approves Three Labs to Conduct Official Scrapie Genotyping

Three laboratories which conduct genotyping tests on sheep to determine susceptibility to scrapie have been officially approved by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Veterinary Services (APHIS-VS) of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA.).

They are GenMark, DeForest, WI; GeneCheck, Inc., Fort Collins, CO.; and GeneSeek, Inc., Lincoln, NE.

The approved laboratories are eligible to conduct privately funded official genotype testing and compete for testing done as part of the National Accelerated Scrapie Eradication Program (NASEP). The approval

lasts for one year and is subject to review and renewal. This means that the test results from blood samples drawn and submitted by accredited veterinarians at their clients' request and expense will be officially recognized by APHIS when tested at one of these laboratories.

Other laboratories that have applied for approval and demonstrated that they meet the standards required by APHIS-VS will be posted on the Scrapie website when they have received notification of approval as official genotyping laboratories.

Genotyping testing is a key element in the NASEP program as part of the Genetic Based Flock Clean-up and Monitoring Plans for flocks identified as exposed to or infected with scrapie. It is also becoming an important management tool for some producers who are breeding for scrapie resistance.

This information and other topics relating to the scrapie eradication program are available at <http://www.animalagriculture.org/scrapie>.

### **Laboratories Approved for Scrapie Genotyping**

GenMark  
1825 Infinity Drive  
DeForest, WI 53532  
(877) 766-3446

GeneCheck, Inc.  
1629 Blue Spruce Drive  
Suite 106  
Ft. Collins, CO 80524  
(800) 822-6740  
Email: [genecheck@genecheck.com](mailto:genecheck@genecheck.com)

GeneSeek, Inc.  
4711 Innovation Drive  
Lincoln, NE 68521  
(402) 435-0665  
Email: [help@genseek.com](mailto:help@genseek.com)

**SOURCE:** Gale Johnson  
[gjohnson@animalagriculture.org](mailto:gjohnson@animalagriculture.org)  
National Institute for Animal  
Agriculture  
Release - December 18, 2003



## **Bronson Appoints State Veterinarian**

Florida Agriculture Commissioner Charles H. Bronson announced the appointment of Dr. Thomas J. Holt to the position of State Veterinarian.

Holt, who has worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 27 years in a series of positions with increasing responsibility, replaces Dr. Leroy Coffman, who resigned in December.

In his new capacity, Holt will serve not only as the State Veterinarian but also as the Director of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Division of Animal Industry - an office responsible for preventing, controlling and eradicating infectious and communicable diseases of livestock and other domestic animals.

"We are pleased to have a professional of Dr. Holt's caliber join our staff," Bronson said. "Our state has been in the forefront in devising strategies to protect us from animal diseases, and Dr. Holt's experience as an emergency manager can only enhance our efforts."

Holt is recognized for his experience and expertise in veterinary and zoonotic disease surveillance and control strategies. He has worked throughout the country and in several foreign countries during his nearly three decade career with the federal government.

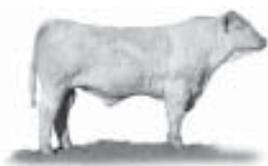
In his current capacity - USDA's Associate Director of Emergency Management for veterinary services for the Eastern Region - he is responsible for overseeing preparedness and response to potentially dangerous animal disease outbreaks that threaten public health, food safety, and food security, including intentional introductions through bio-terrorism.

Holt, a graduate of both college and veterinary school at Cornell University, will begin his state position on March 15.

**SOURCE:** Terence McElroy  
(850) 488-3022  
DOACS  
Release - January 22, 2004

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## Using Charolais Crossbred Heifers as Replacements

In crossbreeding plans involving Charolais bulls the term "terminal cross" is often used. "Terminal cross" means that all calves, both steers and heifers, will be sold at weaning with no heifers kept for replacements.

The most popular continental breed used in the U.S. is the Charolais, a French breed. Charolais gained popularity in the 1950's and 1960's, but fell out of vogue in the 1970's for a number of reasons. Charolais has regained much of its popularity in the last fifteen years, primarily from the use of Charolais bulls in commercial crossbreeding programs. In Florida, Charolais bulls have been used in many cow herds containing Brahman and English crossbred brood cows.

In 1963, Mr. Mac Peacock initiated a crossbreeding study at the Range Cattle REC at Ona that involved Charolais, Brahman and Angus breeds. The study was designed to evaluate the three purebreds and all possible two-way crosses between the three breeds..

One outcome of the study was that Brahman genetics is very important for adaptability whether in combination with Angus or Charolais breeds. It was also observed that Brahman x Charolais crossbred cows performed equally well as Brahman x Angus crossbred cows. These comparisons were for both cow reproduction performance and calf weaning weight.

These research data indicate that heifer calves resulting from crossbreeding Charolais x Brahman will make good replacements into a commercial breeding herd. Another acceptable breeding plan could involve breeding Brangus or Braford type cows to Charolais bulls. Heifers from these crosses could be bred to Angus or Hereford bulls. This would likely be a "terminal cross" because the level of Brahman genetics may be too low for cows in south Florida. However, these heifers should make good brood cows in the more temperate climate of north Florida and other areas in the Southeast.

Recently the author visited the Lightsey Ranch near Lake Wales, Florida. This ranch has a large herd of crossbred brood cows developed by breeding Braford cows to Charolais bulls. This herd is bred back to Angus

bulls and has an excellent weaning rate of heavy feeder calves that attract top dollar when marketed.

In summary, a production plan involving breeding Brahman or Brahman derivative breeds to Charolais bulls will produce replacement heifers very acceptable for use in commercial breeding herds in south Florida. If these heifers and cows are then bred to Angus, Hereford, or back to Charolais bulls resulting females should be marketed for feeding and slaughter. They could possibly be marketed as breeding stock in north Florida and other temperate regions in the Southeast.

**SOURCE:** Findlay Pate  
Range Cattle REC  
Ona, FL  
Published in "The Peace River  
Farmer and Rancher" -  
December 2003

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## Bronson Announces Arrest of Cattle Broker in \$1 Million Swindle

Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles H. Bronson announced the arrest of a Gilchrist County cattle broker in connection with the alleged skimming of an estimated \$1 million from a Tennessee cattle company.

The suspect - Ronald Shephard, 28, of Trenton - is charged with 13 counts of wire fraud, federal violations which could carry up to 65 years in prison.

The arrest was made by Bronson's Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement and the FBI, which have been investigating the case since May of 2000.

According to authorities, Shephard had a contract with Tennessee Dressed Beef, a Nashville based company, to purchase cattle in the Florida, Georgia and Alabama region, and sell them throughout the United States. He is accused of collecting some of the sale

proceeds himself, stealing cattle and skimming money from some of the transactions, authorities said.

“This case represents one of the largest livestock swindles that our office has worked,” Bronson said. “In this business, buyers, sellers and companies that employ them have to rely on the integrity of the individuals involved, and this case represents a major departure from that standard.”

Bronson’s office began investigating the case after the owner of the business that allegedly was defrauded filed a complaint with the Gilchrist County Sheriff’s Department, claiming that the fraud had cost his company about \$1 million.

Shephard was arrested last March by law enforcement officers in Bronson’s office for falsifying animal health certificates for more than 11,000 head of cattle. In that case, he was accused of purchasing numerous books of blank health certificates, so he could ship the cattle out of Florida in the year 2000 without having a veterinarian examine the animals.

In that case, Shephard, who is awaiting trial, could face up to 35 years in prison and fines totaling \$35,000.

**SOURCE:** Lt. Col. Lou Leinhauser  
(850) 245-1300  
Terence McElroy  
(850) 488-3022  
DOACS  
Release - January 29, 2004

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## Bush Proposes \$47 Million Boost for BSE-Related Funding

Speaking at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's annual convention in Phoenix Thursday, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said the White House has budgeted \$60 million in fiscal year 2005 to fund multi-agency efforts to enhance the nation's bovine spongiform encephalopathy prevention program—a \$47 million increase from the previous year.

"The Bush Administration remains committed to protecting public health and the safety of our food supply," Veneman said. "These additional resources will fund enhanced prevention activities including increased testing,

monitoring and surveillance for BSE. These funds are in addition to the \$178 million already announced for completion of the National Centers for Animal Health renovation."

Veneman noted the ban on U.S. beef in dozens of export countries remains a problem, but "restoring our export markets has been a top priority." She noted that U.S. officials have been holding aggressive talks with Japan and Mexico.

It is now up to Congress to approve the budget, a 377 percent increase over fiscal year 2004, which includes \$33 million to further accelerate the development of a national animal ID system, \$17 million for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to collect 40,000 samples and tests for BSE at rendering plants and on farms and \$5 million for the Agricultural Research Service to conduct advanced research and development of BSE testing technologies.

The White House also is seeking approval to allocate \$4 million for the Food Safety and Inspection Service to conduct monitoring and surveillance of compliance with the regulations for specified risk materials and advance meat recovery, and \$1 million for the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration to dispatch rapid response teams to markets experiencing BSE-related complaints regarding contracts or lack of prompt payment.

On Jan. 13, Veneman announced that the president's fiscal 2005 budget would also include \$178 million to complete the renovation of USDA's new National Centers for Animal Health. The Centers, located in Ames, Iowa, is USDA's flagship laboratory for large animal research and diagnosis. It was the National Veterinary Services Laboratory, which is part of the National Centers for Animal Health, that diagnosed the case of BSE found in Washington state.

President Bush's request would represent the final installment of the \$460 million needed to fully renovate the facilities and if approved by Congress will permit the USDA to complete the project by the end of 2007.

**SOURCE:** Daniel Yovich  
<http://www.meatingplace.com>  
Release - January 30, 2004

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