

# Mad Cow Disease: the British plague



**Dec 22, 1984**  
First cattle death from Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy  
Diagnosed Nov 1986

**1987:** Link to ruminant meat and bone-meal (MBM) established

**"Double-speak"**  
**1988:** Under pressure, UK Agriculture Minister **John McGregor** reluctantly agrees to compensate farmers

**Sep 1990:** Bovine offal ban – includes pet food

**Apr 1990:** Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC) formed

**Jul 1989:** EU export ban on cattle born after July 1988

**1988:** Ban on use of ruminant MBM in feed. Slaughter of suspect BSE cases. **Infection crosses species barrier**

**May 1990:** His successor, **John Gummer**, publicly feeds burger to 4-year-old daughter **Cordelia** – while allegedly discussing slaughter of national herd

**Mar 1991**  
First infected calf born after 1988 feed ban

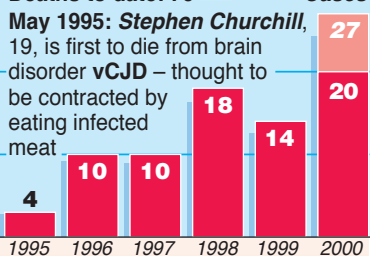
**1992:** BSE cases peak at 3,560 in November

**Jul 1993**  
100,000th BSE case confirmed

**1994:** EU extends export ban

## vCJD – humans at risk

Deaths to date: 76 **Cases**



**Mar 1996:** EU imposes worldwide ban on all UK beef exports. Use of mammal MBM in animal feed banned

**Dec 1997:** Beef on-the-bone banned in UK – lifted Dec 1999

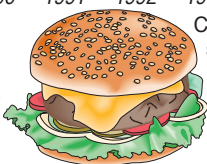
**Aug 1999:** EU lifts export ban

**Jun 2000:** First infected calf born after 1996 feed ban

**Oct 2000:** Government plans "no fault" payments to compensate CJD families

## BSE cases in UK (monthly confirmations)

**Compensation to farmers: 50% from 1988, 100% from 1990**



Chief Medical Officer says **"no scientific evidence"** for not eating beef – despite BSE infection of a cat

**1996:** New Agriculture Minister **Douglas Hogg** overruled in Cabinet on stricter health measures