

SA, China suspend beef meat import, Brazil: no BSE here

According to Independent Online, South Africa and China have joined Japan in suspending imports of Brazilian beef meat over an atypical case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) - also known as mad cow disease.

At the same time, authorities said the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) had been notified of the case and in response indicated it was "maintaining Brazil's status as a country with an insignificant risk of BSE, the best existing risk classification."

The ministry official said Brasilia, as it did with Japan earlier this week, contacted China and South Africa to set the record straight over the atypical case BSE. In its statement issued on Tuesday, the ministry said: "Brazil does not have cases of BSE" and noted that it launched a "preventive action" to preempt similar measures by key importers.

The ministry earlier this week said the case was detected in an animal that died in 2010 in the southern state of Parana and posed "no risk whatsoever to public health or to animal hygiene". With nearly 200 million head of cattle, Brazil is a leading beef exporter, Independent Online says.

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