

CONFIDENTIAL

D. Smales

CMO with wish to know of the Tyrrell sub-committee views. Particularly X & Y below. JFM

Ref: Pigs10i

11.9.90.

~~IN CONFIDENCE~~

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18 Sept

Dr Metters

Dr Metters

From: Dr H Pickles
Med ISD/3

Date: 10 September 1990

Copy: Dr G Jones
Mr D Hagger
Mr T Murray (o/r)
Dr D Harper
Dr Richardson
Mrs Shersby

To ensure Ministers are warned and that the P.C. takes account of health issues
JFM

15/9/90
We must discuss on 17th with JFM/HP. We need a line on present status of porcine agents

SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY OF PIGS

1. There has been a preliminary meeting of the Tyrrell committee today to discuss the significance of the pig experiment in the light of other evidence, for example on feline spongiform encephalopathy.

2. The preliminary conclusions were:

- we now know pigs are capable of expressing spongiform encephalopathy. Previously this had been doubted.
- the clinical picture in pigs exposed to agent by these doses/routes is fairly distinctive and unlikely to have gone unrecognised.
- even so improved monitoring/surveillance of neurological disease in older pigs should be considered.
- feeding of the "specified offal" (ie nervous/lymphoid tissue from cattle) should no longer be permitted, to pigs or to any other species.
- but feeding of other ruminant protein, including from scrapie-infected sheep, can continue to pigs.
- if one natural field case of spongiform encephalopathy were described in a pig, we would need a ban on offal from pigs for human consumption.

X | - we cannot rule out the possibility that unrecognised subclinical spongiform encephalopathy could be present in British pigs though there is no evidence for this: only with parenteral/implantable pharmaceuticals/devices is the theoretical risk to humans of sufficient concern to consider any action.

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