

ANGUS COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

27 August 1996

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Report No 647/96

BEEF AND BEEF PRODUCTS IN SCHOOL MEALS: EXTENSION OF CHOICE TO PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN SMALL SCHOOLS.

ABSTRACT

This report outlines proposals to extend to all schools the existing arrangements for choice with respect to beef and beef products on school meals menus.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Education Committee agrees to extend to small schools the current arrangements in place in all larger schools which enable parents to choose whether or not their children's school meals contain beef and beef products or not, this facility to take effect from 21 October 1996.

2 BACKGROUND

Members will recall that at its meeting 23 April 1996, (Article 10 refers), the Education Committee noted the undernoted action taken to minimise the risk of contracting Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD) through exposure to beef products containing BSE:

- i) in very small schools where there is no choice on menus, beef and beef products have been removed;
- ii) suppliers of beef have provided a guarantee to ensure only young cattle under 30 months of age are used, and that the source of the cattle can be traced back to the farm;
- iii) similarly, manufacturers of beef products have been asked to provide assurances to the Education Department over the source of supply. Where this has not been possible the products concerned have been removed from the menu and replaced with other items.
- iv) in larger schools, where beef products remain on the menu, parents have the option of requesting a beef free menu.

These measures have been generally well received although some concerns have been expressed over the removal of beef and beef products from very small schools where pupils have no choice. (Nineteen schools fall into this category).

3 PROPOSAL

It is proposed to continue the arrangements outlined in (ii), (iii) and (iv) above, in particular the need for suppliers/manufacturers to provide auditable assurances to the Education Department over the source of supply. However, it has proved possible to establish some facility for choice in very small schools which would enable beef and beef products to return to the menus of these schools, based on the same reassurances as are currently in place for other schools, and also on the understanding that parents will be given the option of requesting a beef-free menu for their children in these schools.

As menus for the Autumn term are already in place it is proposed to implement these amendments from 21 October 1996 (ie. beginning of Winter term).

4 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Directors of Law & Administration and Environmental & Consumer Protection have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Tayside Contracts have also been consulted and are in agreement with the terms of this report.

JIM ANDERSON
Director of Education

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.