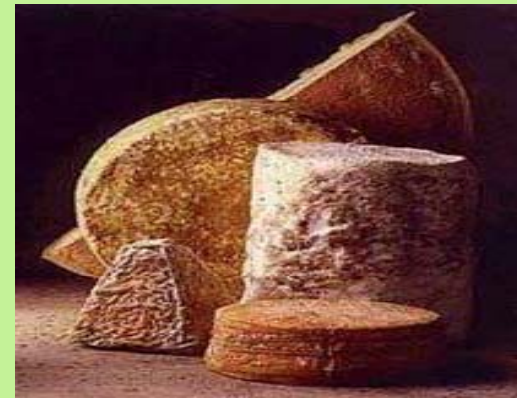


# COWS, CHEESE AND THE COMMISSION



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# What I will cover

- Overview of events in 2006 relating to Bowland Dairy Products Ltd
- Explain scientific issues around antibiotic testing of milk
- Update on current situation
- Other dairy issues of interest



# How it all began...

- FVO mission June 2006 covering meat and milk and the new hygiene regulations (EC No 852/2004 and 853/2004)
- Discovery of activities at Bowland
  - use of milk rejected by other dairies
  - cheese recovery
  - re-use of packaged milk
- Commission call for closure
- FSA issue RASFF



# June/July 2006

- Temporary stoppage to allow FSA audit
- Cleared to resume production subject to some changed procedures
- Attempts to issue a new RASFF prevented by Commission
- Bowland unable to sell cheese
- Legal proceedings begun by company against the Commission
- Intense discussions between FSA and Commission



# September 2006

- Bowland win interim Court ruling on RASFF as judge not convinced of an immediate food safety risk
- FVO return to inspect Bowland against FSA's required changes
- Commission Decision to prohibit cheese from Bowland (2006/694/EC)
- Infraction proceedings initiated against UK



# October 2006 to now

- FSA instruct industry and LA's to follow revised procedures on antibiotic testing as set out in Commission Decision
- Infraction proceedings dropped following satisfactory outcome of further FVO mission in November
- Commission Decision repealed early 2007
- Bowland granted conditional approval but did not resume cheese production
- FVO follow up mission Oct 2007



# Antibiotic testing

## Three types of test:

- immune receptor - 10 minutes, detects  $\beta$ -lactams e.g. Betastar, Snap
- microbial inhibitor - 3 hours, detects wide range of antimicrobial substances e.g. Delvo
- chemical identification/quantification (days) - method used in statutory surveillance programme



# Difficulties

- Number of different rapid tests on the market, each with a different range of antibiotics they detect and different sensitivities for each antibiotic.
- Does a failure mean that an MRL has been exceeded?
- Commission believe there is a high probability that failure means antibiotic residues above the MRL are present.



# Revised procedures following Commission Decision

When milk fails a rapid antibiotic  
screening test:

- reject the milk and send it for disposal as  
Category 2 animal by-product

**or**

- carry out identification and quantification  
of the antibiotic by appropriate chemical  
testing



# GUIDANCE

- FSA set up independent expert group to advise and help develop guidance
- Consultation on draft guidance Oct 2007
- Commission did not provide comments due to ongoing legal case
- Minor revisions in hand



# What else?

- MAP and Crohn's disease



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