



December 27, 2003 3:08 a.m. EST

US Searching For Cow Parts Used In Tallow, Bone Meal

DOW JONES NEWSWIRES

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)--In addition to its meat, U.S. inspectors are working to find byproducts from the Holstein with mad cow disease, said Dalton Hobbs, spokesman for the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The byproducts might have gone to a half-dozen distributors in the Northwest, he said.

Cow parts - including hooves, bones and fat - are used in everything from hand cream and antifreeze, to poultry feed and gardening soils.

Now, it's the secondary parts - the raw material for soil, soaps, candles - that are being searched for.

Los Angeles-based Baker Commodities, Inc., announced Friday it has voluntarily withheld 800 tons of cow byproduct processed in its Seattle and Tacoma, Wash., plants, said company spokesman Ray Kelly. The company, like other "renderers," takes what is left of the cow after it is slaughtered and boils it down into tallow, used for candles, lubricants and soaps; and bone meal, used in fertilizer and animal feed.

If the U.S. Food and Drug Administration determines that the material is tainted, the company's loss could total \$200,000, Kelly said.

DOW JONES REPRINTS

 This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers, use the Order Reprints tool at the bottom of any article or visit: www.djreprints.com. • [See a sample reprint in PDF format](#) • [Order a reprint of this article now](#).

"It's obviously a tragic thing for the whole beef industry, but it's definitely a sizable hit for us," he said.

Darling International, Inc. (DAR), the nation's largest independent rendering operation in the U.S., has also been contacted by the FDA. But officials at its Tacoma and Portland plants, as well as at the international headquarters in Irving, Texas, declined to comment on how that operation has been affected.

"Our first priority was to make sure it didn't go into the food supply," said Hobbs, reiterating that meat sent to two Oregon distributors was recalled earlier in the week.

But tracing all of the sick cow's parts to their final destination, including numerous possible incarnations in household products, has proved challenging.

"It's like the old Upton Sinclair line - 'We use everything but the squeal,'" Hobbs said. "We have nearly 100% utilization of the animal. But when you have so many niche markets, it makes it incredibly challenging to trace where this one cow may have gone."

Companies that use bone meal from cows to create fertilizers - a kind of soil popular with rose growers - may find themselves under the spotlight. At the height of Britain's mad cow epidemic in the 1990s, three victims of the human form of mad cow were found to be gardeners.

In 1996, the Royal Horticultural Society of London released an advisory, cautioning gardeners to wear face masks after it was reported that the dust from the bone-meal soil could carry the mutated protein.

But Scientific American editor Philip Yam said there was no conclusive evidence the gardeners died from inhaling soil containing the infected cow tissue.

A far greater risk is the cow material - including roughage and offal - used in animal feed, Yam said.

In 1997, the FDA banned cow feed that included cow byproducts, after scientists concluded that the feed was the main transmitter of mad cow. The disease, formally known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE, is found in a cow's nervous system.

URL for this article:

http://online.wsj.com/article/0,,BT_CO_20031227_000067,00.html

Updated December 27, 2003 3:08 a.m.

Copyright 2003 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our [Subscriber Agreement](#) and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones

Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit www.djreprints.com.