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**Deadline for Mad Cow Disease Rule Looms for Feed Industry**  
FACT calls for quick implementation and even stronger protections

Chicago, IL – Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) is dismayed to learn that steps needed to protect the public from mad cow disease might be further delayed. This new delay would come after years of inaction under the Bush administration despite the detection of mad cow disease in the United States in 2003.

According to industry reports in several trade publications, the impending April 27th deadline for full implementation of the 2008 Feed Rule will be extended 60 days by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The final rule prohibits certain risky materials from use in animal feed and requires alternative disposal of these materials. As the FDA would not confirm or deny the rumor, FACT now calls on the Agency to implement the rule without delay and to continue work on strengthening it.

Responding to the rumored delay, FACT's Executive Director, Richard Wood stated, "In order to protect our food supply, the FDA not only must implement the final rule, but also must improve it as well. While the 2008 rule is not perfect, it's better than doing nothing, which is essentially what's going on right now." Wood added, "In light of all the recent food safety scares in the United States, we have a responsibility to be proactive against the threat of mad cow disease."

Although it is an improvement compared to the current minimal regulations, the 2008 Feed Rule remains inadequate as it fails to: (1) prohibit the use of poultry litter as cattle feed and (2) remove *all* risky material from animal feed. The rule places certain restrictions on what can be included in animal feeds, but still allows cattle parts that could be infected with mad cow disease to be fed to other cattle. The rule intentionally allows 10 percent of infectious material to remain in feed. The human form of mad cow disease, new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (nvCJD), can spread to people who eat contaminated meat. Both diseases are slowly progressive, fatal, and affect the central nervous system.

Based in Chicago, FACT believes that healthy animals are essential for maintaining a safe food supply. FACT was at the table from the very beginning when mad cow disease was linked to nvCJD in people in 1996, and provided input when the original feed ban rule was drafted the following year. Over the last thirteen years, FACT has been present at stakeholder meetings, agency briefings, and other events related to the U.S. response to mad cow disease. Since 2003, when the first U.S. cow was diagnosed with mad cow disease, FACT has called on the FDA to amend the original rule and enact the strictest controls possible to prevent the spread of the disease. For more information please contact Richard Wood at (773) 525-4952 or visit [www.foodanimalconcerns.org](http://www.foodanimalconcerns.org).