



AUG. 23, 2007

Contacts: Matt Poore, *Animal Science, N.C. Cooperative Extension,*
N.C. State University, 919.515.7798

Mark Alley, *College of Veterinary Medicine, N.C. State University, 919-513-6015*

Current Status of Recycled Poultry Bedding (Poultry Litter) Feeding Regulations

Due to the ongoing drought conditions, most producers in our region are searching for alternative feeds. We have received many questions about the legality of feeding Recycled Poultry Bedding (RPB, formerly known as poultry litter) to cattle. In response to the discovery of the first case of BSE in the United States, the FDA proposed to ban feeding of RPB in January 2004, and as a result many producers and advisors still believe that RPB feeding has, indeed, been banned. However, the FDA never followed through with that proposed ban, and RPB is currently a legal feed ingredient.

New regulations aimed at reducing the risk of BSE to the U.S. cattle herd are being considered, but it is very unlikely that a ban on RPB will be implemented in the near future. Given that, producers who have used RPB in the past can continue to incorporate it into their winter feed plan. It is also appropriate for producers seeking an emergency feed source to consider it for their winter feeding programs this year. As usual, the RPB should be deep stacked and allowed to heat prior to feeding, and feeding guidelines available from the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service should be followed.

If producers have traditionally mixed RPB with corn silage or other feeds for long-term storage, that practice is discouraged. The reason is that if more BSE is discovered in the U.S., there could be a quick decision to implement an immediate ban on feeding RPB, and if a producer has a large supply of a mixed feed containing RPB, it could be costly to the producer. If RPB is fed as a supplement to silage, we recommend deep stacking it separately and then adding it to the silage at the time of feeding.

For the time being, it would not be recommended in most situations for a producer to invest additional capital in developing a long-term program for processing and feeding RPB. However for producers in poultry producing areas and especially for beef producers who have poultry, Recycled Poultry Bedding may be their best emergency feed alternative.