

Case of mad cow disease found in France

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Close-up of a cow in southwestern France. A cow in central France has tested positive for mad cow disease, the country's fifth detected case this year, local authorities said.

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The 12-year old dairy cow from the central-eastern Bourgogne region was put down in August after developing the symptoms of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). The animal later tested positive for the disease.

Local veterinary chief Dominique Chabanet said Monday it was probably infected by eating animal-based flour, before its use as cow feed was banned in 1996.

The cow's calves were to be put down as a security measure, along with all animals born to the same herd in the same year.

The number of French cases of BSE has been declining steadily, from a peak of 274 in 2001 to 31 last year.

France has recorded a total of 15 cases of the human form of the disease, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, since it first appeared in 1996 -- compared with more than 150 cases in Britain. — AFP

<http://www.todayonline.com/articles/143313.asp>