

# Could a new secret breed of supercow help the war on cancer?



RUMINANT REMEDY: Cattle at six Scottish farms are taking part in a revolutionary experiment

By Mike MacEachern

A NEW breed of 'super cows' whose meat and milk could help stem Britain's spiralling cancer rate is being reared secretly in Scotland.

The beef and dairy cattle are being raised on a special feed impregnated with selenium, a mineral that is vital in preventing cancer in humans.

Scientists have discovered that meat and milk from the cattle is rich in selenium which, when eaten or drunk, is then absorbed into the human system.

They believe the super cows could hold the key to reversing Scotland's position as the 'sick man' of Europe. A leading animal feeds manufacturer is pioneering the revolutionary experiment on six Scottish farms from Dumfries to Aberdeen.

Selenium, in the form of organic yeast, is being mixed in with feed by

## Selenium in feed may be the key to a healthy diet

ucts being sold in Britain's supermarkets and shops.

Next month the company will meet with major milk suppliers to discuss whether or not selenium-enriched products are likely to be commercially viable.

Scientists believe the experiments could eventually lead to milk, eggs, poultry and beef containing three times more selenium than is found in the same products from normal cows and chickens.

Davidson Brothers spokesman Bill Souter said: "Once we are happy with the tests, we don't have to get the approval of anyone else to sell the products because the levels of selenium will be within the permitted levels."

A study by the University of Reading's Nutritional Sciences Research Unit estimates that dietary selenium intake in the UK has fallen by about half during the past 20 years.

Selenium is a mineral that helps protect cells from damage by acting as an antioxidant. It is stored within the body for use in times of disease and stress. It is found in a number of foods including wheatgerm, tuna, onions, broccoli and Brazil nuts.

Too much selenium is toxic and can cause abnormal growth of the toenails and fingernails.

### 'We do not have to get approval'

Davidson Bros, of Shotts, Lanarkshire, so the mineral can be absorbed naturally by the cattle.

Results show the milk and beef from the animals contains higher levels of selenium, which in humans helps stave off prostate, bowel and skin cancer as well as other life-threatening diseases.

Selenium deficiency in humans has also been linked to both male and female infertility.

None of the milk or meat has yet been allowed to be sold to the public until stringent tests have been completed.

But experts are excited by the prospect of disease-prevention prod-