

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Foot And Mouth Disease” and “Mad Cow Disease” Are Creating Havoc for a Houston-Based Company Specializing in Castle Tours.

SUGAR LAND, TX -March 30, 2001 - The foot and mouth disease has proven devastating for the tourism industry not just the agriculture industry. The foot and mouth disease is caused by a virus that affects cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, sheep, pigs, and goats. Many historical sites in Great Britain and Ireland are now closed to tourism. Thousands of country roads and trails are closed, as well as numerous tourists sites; many events and festivals have been canceled. The following famous sites are now closed until further notice: Stonehenge, Blenheim Palace, many sections of Hadrian's Wall, Kenilworth Castle, Bramber Castle and Camber Castle.

Castles of the World, a Texas based European touring company specializing in castle tours, is closely watching the situation. Jaime Fernandez Jr., President of Castles of the World, said, “We have an employee whose first job every morning is to monitor the situation. We are very concerned with how this might spread to continental Europe.” Fernandez added, “Since most of the castles are in rural areas the disease certainly has the potential of creating havoc for our tours.”

Castles of the World is preparing contingency plans for the worst-case scenario that the disease might spread to the continental Europe. The current tours offered do not include the infected areas. We are constantly in contact with the tourism boards of France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and Austria in case the situation worsens. Our primary responsibility is towards our passengers. Our goal is to give the passenger a pleasant vacation without any worries about closures, or any other kind of threat. Castles of the World will be offering tours to see the castles in England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland during the summer of 2002. We are confident by then the epidemic will be under control. Among the current castles to be visited are the famous Neuschwanstein and Chambord Castles as well as the stunning Palaces of Versailles, Fontainebleau and Chenonceau, just to name a few.

Castles of the World has a web page with continuously updated information on castles and other historical sites closures. For more information see: www.castles.org/news The page contains up-to-date information regarding the epidemic, as well as a comprehensive list of castles and historical site closures. After the epidemic is over the page will continue to offer news related to castles and other historical sites in Europe.

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