



agriculture,  
forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Media Statement**

**14 January 2020**

## **UPDATE ON THE FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE OUTBREAK IN LIMPOPO**

Four further cases of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) were reported since mid-December 2019, with 3 cases reported in December and 1 case reported in the first week of January 2020. The total number of confirmed positive locations since the start of outbreak has risen to fifteen (15).

More than 130 points were identified with possible links to specific auctions and known affected properties. Follow-up investigations and collection of samples were already performed on 95 of these points and precautionary quarantine has been lifted on 44 properties that have been proven negative for FMD.

All properties where the disease has been confirmed have been placed under quarantine and cloven hoofed animals are not allowed to move off the quarantined properties. Guidelines and application procedures have been finalized for animals on FMD quarantined properties to undergo early slaughter at designated abattoirs with specific conditions to prevent the spread of FMD. FMD does not affect people therefore meat and milk from infected livestock is safe for human consumption

The Department, together with the Provincial Veterinary Services, started conducting awareness on FMD clinical signs and biosecurity measures in Limpopo Province during the week of 4<sup>th</sup> December. Awareness was already conducted in 6 villages in the Molemole area and 315 farmers attended these sessions.

The use of FMD vaccine has not been indicated in controlling the current outbreak. The vaccination of cattle against FMD is conducted only by state veterinary officials in specific areas determined by the Director Animal Health, free of charge. FMD vaccine is a controlled product that may only be handled by Veterinary Service, the general public is urged to immediately notify state veterinary officials should there be a suspicion of someone having, or claiming to have or sell FMD vaccine.

The prohibition on the gathering of cloven hoofed animals from two or more properties, for distribution to two or more properties, has been published in the Government Gazette on 4 December 2019 and is applicable to the whole country.

This resulted after the Veterinary Authorities identified that the short-term congregation and redistribution of cloven hoofed animals played an integral part in the spread of the disease in this outbreak as all the affected properties have been linked directly or indirectly to auctions. This notice does not prohibit the movement of livestock from farm to farm, or private auctions at individual farms. The gazetted notice is available on the DAFF website <https://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/Home/Foot-and-mouth>.

In order to bring normality to the trade of livestock, the Department and the FMD Technical Task Team urge all auctioneers to register with the Agricultural Produce Agents Council (APAC). This is a legal requirement and auctioneers must comply with the conditions laid down in the Agricultural Produce Agents Act, 1992 (Act 12 of 1992). Additional biosecurity measures to be applied by registered auctioneers are under discussions and will be communicated as soon as finalised.

The Department encourages livestock owners to limit the movement of cloven hoofed animals until the extent of the outbreak has been fully determined. If movements are necessary, the buyers are advised to request health declarations before any animals are bought from sellers, to prevent the possible infection of new properties by positive animals being brought in. Private vets are asked to assist their clients by providing health declarations that indicate that the herd of origin has been inspected and found to be free of clinical signs of FMD and that all animals have been on the farm for at least 28 days before inspection. This will provide additional guarantees that FMD infected animals could not have been introduced onto the farm in that period.

Livestock owners should remain vigilant for clinical signs of FMD in their animals. Any suspected cases of FMD should please be reported to the nearest State Veterinary Office or the nearest veterinarian for further investigation. Owners who have bought from known infected properties are also encouraged to report this to the Provincial Veterinary Authorities for speedy follow up investigations.

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