



Centre of Excellence: Natural Resources

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)



FMD is a contagious viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, and other artiodactyl species. The disease is endemic in buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*), which act as carriers and thus show no symptoms, but infect other animals. The virus is found and spread through all body fluids such as saliva, urine, faeces, milk and in the air that is breathed out by all diseased animals.

SYMPTOMS

- Blisters and sores in the mouth (gums, lips and tongue), are raw and painful, affecting the animal's ability to eat and often causing drooling.
- Blisters and sores between the toes and where the hooves join the skin, this can cause animals to limp and limit movement. Worse case they may lose their claws or hooves.
- Cows can develop sores on their teats, resulting in a sudden drop in milk production.

WHAT TO DO WHEN ANIMALS GET THE DISEASE?



- If you see any of the above-mentioned signs in your cattle, immediately contact your Animal Health Technician or State Veterinarian.
- If the disease is present, your animals (and animal products) will not be allowed to move to other areas without a movement permit from the Provincial Veterinary Office.
- The government may decide to vaccinate the healthy cattle when there is disease in the area.

IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE



Animals:

Sick animals lose weight, do not grow and produce less milk, while young calves may die, all resulting in financial loss for farmers.



Control measures:

Controlling the disease entails enormous cost, including the construction and maintenance of fences as well as the testing and vaccination of animals all resulting in financial costs.



Impact on markets:

Losing FMD-free status means that certain countries will not import animals, meat or meat products from the affected country until such time as it regains its FMD-free status.

CONTROL AND PREVENTATIVE MEASURES



- Physical separation of wildlife and livestock.
- Repeated vaccination of cattle herds exposed to wildlife.
- Control of animal movements.
- Careful assessment of the risk of FMD virus introduction into disease-free areas.



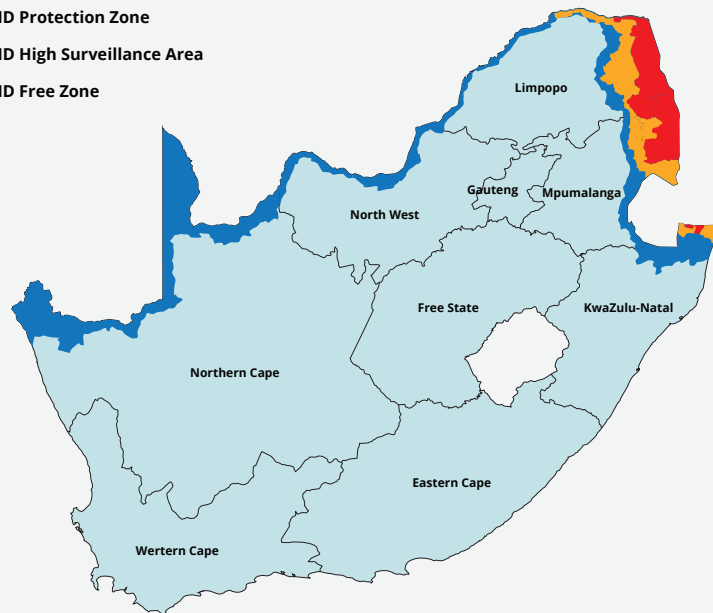
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FMD Control Zones of South Africa

- FMD Infected Zone
- FMD Protection Zone
- FMD High Surveillance Area
- FMD Free Zone



STATUS THROUGHOUT SA

In South Africa, buffalo in the Kruger National Park are carriers of this disease. Therefore the disease is localized to the park and its surrounding areas, effectively the north-eastern part of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. To stop the disease from spreading, the area around Kruger is fenced off to separate these cattle from the rest of the country. This area is called the Protection Zone. All cattle in this area are inspected and some are vaccinated to protect the animals and prevent spread.



VACCINATION

- Only allowed in the Buffer/Protection Zone.
- Vaccine is only for official use, because all vaccinations are carried out by Veterinary Services' officials (therefore only restricted use).



Gum of cow with foot-and-mouth disease

Photo: InfluentialPoints



Cleft of hoof of cow with foot-and-mouth disease

Photo: InfluentialPoints

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Veterinary Procedural Notice:

https://www.nda.agric.za/vetweb/Disease%20Control/Protocols/FMD%20Veterinary%20Procedural%20Notice%20_November%202014.pdf