



FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is foot and mouth disease?

Foot and mouth disease (FMD) is a severe, highly contagious viral disease of livestock that has a significant economic impact. The disease affects cattle, swine, sheep, goats and other cloven-hoofed ruminants. The virus is found in all body fluids, such as saliva, urine, faeces, milk and in the air that diseased animals expel.

- Animals get this disease when eating or breathing in the virus from these body fluids.
- People can also spread the virus through contaminated clothing, shoes, hands and tyres.



2. What are the signs?

- Blisters and sores in the mouth (gums, lips and tongue) are raw and painful, making it difficult for the animal to eat, and often cause drooling.
- Blisters and sores between the toes and where the hooves join the skin, can cause the animals to limp and not want to walk around.
- Cows can develop sores on their teats. This results in a sudden drop in milk production.



3. Why is FMD important?

- Farmers lose money because sick animals lose weight, do not grow and produce less milk. Young calves may die.
- A large amount of money is spent on controlling and containing the disease.
- Countries that do not have the disease will not buy animals, meat or meat products from South Africa when the disease spreads.

4. What to do in suspected cases?

- If any signs of foot and mouth disease are seen, immediately call your nearest State Veterinarian.
- FMD diseased or suspected animals are prohibited to be admitted in an abattoir or slaughtered.
- If FMD is suspected on post-mortem examination, the carcass and viscera need to be handled as prescribed by the State Veterinarian.
- The room and all the equipment need to be disinfected with acetic acid to prevent the spread of the virus in the abattoir.

Last updated: January 2022



Western Cape
Government

E-mail: info@elsenburg.com
www.elsenburg.com
#ForTheLoveOfAgriculture