

The responsibilities of animal owners in terms of the Animal Diseases Act (Act 35 of 1984)

Notice: All owners of livestock



InfoPak 3

More information about farm biosecurity and appropriate preparation for FMD

The **28-day on-farm isolation** is an essential biosecurity tool for **disease risk reduction**. It allows the new animals to be observed for signs of disease without placing the rest of the herd at risk and it ideally requires:

- separated facilities and equipment;
 - species-specific fences to keep all animals on the farm safe and apart,
 - species-specific crush, neck-clamp, halters, etc. for individual handling.
- dedicated workers with no contact with resident animals;
- separate equipment, feed and water sources/supplies;
- no cross contamination - infrastructure such as a farm entrance(s), loading ramp positioning, vehicle washing and disinfection facilities should be maintained and managed.
- Specific provision for stud animals acquired for the breeding season may include pre-movement quarantine. Discuss this with your local state veterinarian.

Correctly applying this will require good **planning** and **commitment** from all people involved at farm level. The involvement of a local veterinarian, who can also test for other animal diseases, during this period is highly recommended.

How to manage the farm biosecurity risk associated with people:

- People **working directly with livestock** who do not live on the farm or who return to the farm from visiting family and friends, may introduce the FMD virus. They are a risk if they have been exposed to an FMD infected animal or environment contaminated with the FMD virus within the last 7 days. Procedures to prevent exposure to your animals could include:
 - providing separate working clothes that are only used on the farm;
 - washing (removing all organic material) and disinfection (using a product that inactivates the FMD-virus) of clothes, footwear, etc.;
 - refusing such individuals any access to your livestock for a few days if recent direct FMD contact was probable.
- Lock the farm gates and limit **visitors** (by appointment only), services and deliveries to the property. Preferably arrange meetings with agents and other parties off-farm.

How to respond to a FMD scare:

- If you are informed of a suspect FMD outbreak in your vicinity, do not move your animals. Your livestock may already be infected and you may cause further spread of this highly contagious disease, making you inadvertently guilty of contravening section 11 of the ADA and accordingly liable.
- Do not forget the human connection: Consider, discuss and agree beforehand with all people on the farm which practical biosecurity protocols you can implement. For example, if possible, provide on-farm accommodation for workers directly involved with livestock during a suspect outbreak and prevent direct or indirect contact with other high-risk people and susceptible livestock populations, until the risk is averted.

Be prepared for an FMD outbreak

In the event of a confirmed FMD outbreak movement of live animals and their products may be stopped or limited. Consider your farming enterprise(s) and plan how to continue and protect your income stream within these limitations

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without contributing to spread of the disease. Consider animals in different stages of production and the effect on your standard operation, as well as the welfare of the animals. Involve your local herd veterinarian in planning and work with your neighbours, local community, industry bodies, marketing partners and state veterinarian. Documenting your standard operating procedures, if not done already, will assist you in planning.

In case you will need to **apply for FMD vaccination** to protect your herd(s) and form a buffer to contain the disease, ensure that you have an up-to-date map of your farm. It must indicate all surveyor-general farm portions used by cattle and other cloven-hoofed livestock. The presence and location of cloven-hoofed wildlife and particularly buffalo should be included.

Together we can prevent FMD from entering our province and the severe economic losses that can accompany this.

For further information and examples of all documents mentioned, please visit the Western Cape Veterinary Services website at <https://shorturl.at/Hxfeo>

To learn more about FMD, visit the WCDa website: <https://bit.ly/3PpeK8R>

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