



MINISTER
AGRICULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA STATEMENT

12 MAY 2026

MINISTER STEENHUISEN ANNOUNCES ARRIVAL OF ADDITIONAL 2 MILLION DOSES OF FMD VACCINE

The Minister of Agriculture, John Steenhuisen, announced that with the arrival this morning of a further 2 million doses of the Dollvet vaccine from Turkey, the Department of Agriculture has now successfully coordinated the importation of 8 million vaccine doses since late February. This accelerated procurement drive marks a major escalation in government's war against Foot and Mouth Disease and a turning point in the Department's commitment to biosecurity, food security and the protection of rural livelihoods.

Underscoring the scale of this achievement, Minister Steenhuisen said:

"With an additional 5 million doses expected to arrive shortly, South Africa's total imported vaccine volume will rise to 13 million doses. When combined with the 2 million BVI vaccine doses secured last year, the country will have landed 15 million doses by the end of May 2026. This sends a clear signal of our determination to protect the national interest, defend our livestock industry, and win the war against FMD."

These efforts form part of the Department's strategic objective to vaccinate 80% of the national herd, comprising approximately 14 million cattle, by the end of December 2026. The vaccination campaign is central to South Africa's long-term strategy of achieving and maintaining "FMD free with vaccination" status, while reducing the economic and social damage caused by recurring outbreaks.

By securing vaccine volumes at this scale, the Department is ensuring that the agricultural sector remains a resilient pillar of the economy, capable of meeting international animal health standards while safeguarding domestic food security and protecting export markets.



Regional approach

Diseases do not respect borders, and Minister Steenhuisen is leading a new era of South-South cooperation in the fight against transboundary animal diseases. On Monday, in Hazyview, Mpumalanga, the Minister was joined by his counterpart from Eswatini, Mr Mandla Tshawuka, as well as representatives from Mozambique, to vaccinate 300 cattle in a demonstration of regional solidarity and coordinated action.

Reflecting on lessons drawn from South America's success in controlling Foot and Mouth Disease, Minister Steenhuisen said: "One of the clearest lessons from South America is that you cannot defeat this disease in isolation. Cows do not carry passports. If one country acts alone, the risk remains for everyone. That is why we are working closely with our neighbours to build a truly regional response. We must move beyond simply reacting to outbreaks and establish a SADC antigen bank so that Southern Africa can rapidly access vaccines when they are needed most, without relying on lengthy international procurement processes."

SADC Ministerial meeting

Momentum behind this regional effort continues to build. Later this month, Minister Steenhuisen will chair a meeting of SADC Agriculture Ministers in Zimbabwe, where discussions will focus on establishing a regional platform for animal movement control, livestock traceability, and coordinated response mechanisms for transboundary animal diseases. The Minister also delivered a message of support to South Africa's farming communities: "We have seen the pain, the uncertainty and the economic damage this disease has inflicted on farming communities across our country. I have made a commitment that if we continue implementing this plan at scale and with urgency, this must be the last major Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak to devastate our people. We are fighting this disease with everything we have, and we stand firmly with our farmers."

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Issued by: The Ministry of Agriculture