



MINISTER  
AGRICULTURE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001; 20 Steve Biko Street, Pretoria, 0001  
Tel.: 012 319 6000; Email: [queries@nda.gov.za](mailto:queries@nda.gov.za); Web: [www.nda.gov.za](http://www.nda.gov.za)

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**11 MARCH 2026**

## **SOUTH AFRICA AND GERMANY FORGE PARTNERSHIP TO COMBAT FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE**

In a landmark move for international agricultural diplomacy, the South African Minister of Agriculture, John Steenhuisen, and the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity of Germany, Alois Rainer, officially signed a Joint Declaration of Intent on Agricultural Development to enhance bilateral cooperation in the control of foot and mouth disease (FMD) and trade in animal products.

This agreement, that was signed Tuesday evening in Cape Town, marks a significant diplomatic milestone, as it represents the first time in 13 years that a German Minister of Agriculture has visited South Africa. This visit signals a revitalised era of cooperation between the two nations, focusing on the crucial challenges of biosecurity and global trade.

### **Alliance against FMD**

As South Africa navigates a relentless FMD outbreak, this partnership provides a vital lifeline of technical expertise and innovation. “We are deeply appreciative of the German government’s commitment to this partnership,” said Minister Steenhuisen.

“To welcome my German counterpart to South African soil for the first time in over a decade underscores the weight of this agreement. “This is not just a document, it is a powerful tool that will help us safeguard our livestock industry and secure the livelihoods of our farmers,” he added.

The parties have identified five core areas of focus to be implemented under the declaration:

- Knowledge sharing: Exchanging best practices on outbreak prevention and FMD containment, with a specific focus on biosecurity in animal husbandry and veterinary services.
- Wildlife monitoring: Developing robust FMD monitoring systems, particularly for wildlife populations.
- Advanced immunisation: Exploring new frontiers in FMD immunisation, including the application of mRNA technologies.
- Diagnostic research: Collaborative research and development on diagnostic tools, specifically differentiating infected from vaccinated animals (DIVA) tests.
- Risk management: Researching FMD risk materials in controlled slaughter environments.

### **Strengthening global ties**

The signing of this Joint Declaration arrives at an imperative juncture for the South African agricultural sector, offering a structured pathway to modernise disease control.

“This collaboration goes beyond immediate crisis management.. “It paves the way for a long-term exchange of expertise, trade development, skills enhancement, and the integration of cutting-edge technology and innovation in agriculture,” Minister Steenhuisen concluded.

**-End-**

**For media enquiries, please contact:**

**Joylene van Wyk**

**083 292 7399**

**063 298 5661**

**Issued by: The Ministry of Agriculture**

---

Department of Agriculture • Departement van Landbou • UmNyango wezokuLima • ISebe lezoLimo • UMnyango Wezolimo • Kgoro ya Temo •  
Lefapha la Temo • Lefapha la Temothuo • Litiko Letekulima • Muhasho wazwa Vhulimi, •Ndzawulo ya Vurimi