



MINISTER  
AGRICULTURE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## Media release

### Immediate release

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## Minister Steenhuisen to lift Foot and mouth disease management area restrictions in Eastern Cape and Limpopo

The Minister of Agriculture, John Steenhuisen, has decided to lift the disease management areas (DMA) in Eastern Cape and Limpopo after intensified efforts by Veterinary Services were successful in containing the spread of Foot and mouth disease (FMD) in the two provinces.

In the Kouga and Kou-Kamma municipalities in Eastern Cape, a DMA has been in place since 26 July 2024 to support the control of FMD outbreaks. Vaccination was implemented as a control measure and 144, 424 vaccinations were done. The last cases were reported in September 2024. Extensive serological surveillance was done in the DMA to confirm that there are no undetected pockets of the disease. The minister can now confirm the lifting of the movement restrictions in the Eastern Cape DMA.

In Limpopo, the DMA has been in place since September 2022 to control an FMD outbreak in diptanks in the Vhembe Municipality. Cattle at 34 diptanks were vaccinated in two rounds of vaccination, with a total of 23, 024 vaccinations done. Following extensive serological surveillance conducted at the end of 2024, the department is satisfied that there is no evidence of FMD virus in the DMA. All restrictions on the DMA can, therefore, be lifted.

The lifting of the DMA restrictions comes into effect today as it is published in the *Government Gazette*.

Minister Steenhuisen again emphasised that biosecurity is everybody's responsibility. "Biosecurity is not just a farming concern, but a shared responsibility of every individual in South Africa. We call on all citizens, especially those interacting with livestock or moving between rural areas, to consistently adhere to all biosecurity measures. Only through our collective efforts can we safeguard our agricultural sector, make sure livelihoods are protected and ensure we keep our areas FMD-free, he added.



## **Farms in Eastern Cape will remain under quarantine**

A total of 76 farms in Eastern Cape, which were infected and/or vaccinated, remain under quarantine. Movement restrictions will remain in place on these farms until testing has confirmed the absence of viral circulation. Testing will commence 12 months after the farms have been vaccinated. The department has decided to allow milk from quarantined farms to be released into the local market following single pasteurisation, instead of double pasteurisation, which was required when the disease was still active in the area.

## **Maintaining the DMA in KwaZulu-Natal**

The DMA in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) will remain in place since there are still signs of active virus circulation in the area. Some outbreaks were detected outside of the DMA. An abattoir in the Vryheid area in the DMA was designated to slaughter animals from premises under FMD restrictions. A system has been put in place to assess the level of biosecurity on individual farms, with the intention of aligning the control measures to the biosecurity risks.

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