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; Web: www.nda.gov.za

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Minister Steenhuisen responds to frequently asked questions on foot-and-mouth disease

The Minister of Agriculture, Mr John Steenhuisen, indicated that the Ministry of Agriculture has been flooded with media queries about the occurrence of foot-and-mouth disease in especially two provinces, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

Concerns were raised about meat safety and interventions from the Department of Agriculture to contain existing outbreaks and prevent future outbreaks.

We would like to put the facts on the table and ask all citizens to make it their business to obtain knowledge about how to mitigate the spread of this disease.

“After all, biosecurity is everyone's responsibility,” Minister Steenhuisen emphasised.

FMD FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What is the current intervention by the Department of Agriculture?

All infected properties are placed under quarantine, no movement is allowed into, out of and through these areas/farms. Large areas, where individuals cannot be served with quarantine notices, are declared Disease Management Areas and the same restrictions apply.

They are further vaccinated and marked as vaccinated (with an F Brand on the neck).

How many vaccines bought and the cost?

The department has ordered 901 200 doses of vaccines to the value of over R70 million. This mean that over 900 thousand animals will be vaccinated in all areas that the department has prioritised.

Limpopo and Mpumalanga will also be conducting their routine vaccinations that are conducted three times a year.

Some of the vaccine will go to Gauteng and KZN.

When and where will vaccination start?

Multiple teams will vaccinate areas as listed above simultaneously (It will not start at a specific place).

Vaccination will start as soon as the vaccines are received and cleared. It is anticipated that the department will take receipt of the vaccines late next week and will then start vaccinating in the following week.

Should South Africans worry about meat shortages?

There is no concern for shortages; despite some feedlots being affected, there are several feedlots that are slaughtering that are not affected.

Secondly, FMD does not kill animals, so there is not going to be mass mortalities which will result in fewer animals and therefore a shortage of meat.

Is it safe to eat meat infected with FMD?

FMD does not affect people, it only affects cloven-hoofed animals, so consumers do not have to be concerned.

Response to outbreak at Karan Beef:

The Red Meat Industry Services (RMIS) will activate a centralised Operational Centre (OC) at its headquarters on Monday, 9 June 2025.

The OC will be led by a designated RMIS veterinarian and will oversee a team of 13 veterinary professionals, along with a specialist public relations and public affairs agency, forming the FMD Working Group. The FMD Working Group will be mandated to develop and implement a structured, time-bound response to the outbreak, with medium- to long-term goals, including a focus on vaccination among other key areas.

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For further information, contact:

Joylene van Wyk
Director: Media Liaison
Ministry of Agriculture
joylenev@nda.gov.za / 0832927399