

# Farmers advised on foot and mouth disease

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has advised farmers and livestock owners that all parties transacting with cloven-hoofed animals should observe the utmost caution.



zephylwer0 via [Pxabay](#)

"All gatherings of animals from more than one source (incl. auctions, livestock shows, and speculative transactions) are discouraged until the exact situation is known," said a joint media statement by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and the National Animal Health Forum on Foot and Mouth Disease.

On 1 November 2019, veterinary services were alerted to clinical signs suspicious for oot-and-Mouth disease (FMD) in a herd of cattle on a farm in the Molemole local municipality of the Capricorn district, Limpopo.

"Trace back and trace forward thus far linked infected animals to an auction facility in Limpopo Province and it has been confirmed that at least five commercial facilities have been affected as a result," the statement said.

More properties that purchased animals at the same auction could be affected.

All known infected properties have been placed under quarantine, suspect properties under precautionary quarantine; and plans to resolve the situation are being implemented.

Farmers and livestock owners have been urged to not remove live cloven-hooved animals until the current situation has been stabilised.

"Only transport animals that are healthy and destined for immediate slaughter. All buyers of animals should ensure that the animals purchased are free of disease, especially free of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)," the statement said.

Any transaction of cloven-hooved animals should be accompanied with a veterinary health certificate issued by a veterinarian.

"It should be noted that FMD virus can remain viable in the environment for a few days. Thus, any transport vehicle should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected away from any animals before animals are loaded. Vehicles used to transport animals to abattoirs should thus be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before leaving the abattoir premises," the statement said.

Anyone spreading FMD through the movement of animals may be held civilly and or criminally liable for such an offence.

"Any person having had contact with possibly infected animals should take all precautions necessary to change clothing and footwear before handling other cloven-hooved animals.

"Anybody that is unsure of the above advice should please contact their local state or private veterinarian for biosecurity guidance and/or assistance to develop a biosecurity protocol for their farm," the statement said.

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