

Botswana resumes beef exports from areas free of FMD outbreak

Botswana has resumed exports of live cattle and beef from areas declared free of foot and mouth disease (FMD) but sales to Europe, which has tougher import restrictions, remain suspended, a senior government official told Reuters on Wednesday, 28 September.



Source: Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

In August, Botswana suspended beef exports following an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in one of its disease control zones in the northeast of the southern African country.

The slaughter of cloven-hoofed animals from the zone remains suspended but sales and exports from the rest of the country have opened up again, subject to conditions set by importing countries.

Apart from the EU, Botswana exports beef and live cattle to Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, which is also affected by sporadic outbreaks of foot and mouth disease.



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Negotiations to reopen exports underway

Kefentse Motshegwa, acting director of veterinary services, said sales to the EU and Britain remain suspended with negotiations to reopen exports underway.

"Following an outbreak, there are specific processes to be implemented and arrangements that must be negotiated with the EU before exports are resumed, and this process is ongoing," Motshegwa said.

Along with South Africa and Namibia, Botswana is one of the biggest beef exporters to the EU, where it enjoys duty- and quota-free access and where it saw export earnings drop from \$130m in 2010 to \$20m in 2020, according to central bank statistics.

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