

EASTERN CAPE RED MEAT PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION



17th May 2024

Dear Members,

Detailed Update on Foot-and -Mouth Disease in the Eastern Cape.

Agri Eastern Cape had several meetings with relevant role players on the 14th and 15th of May 2024, to receive an update and get an understanding of the status of the Foot-and Mouth Disease (hereafter "FMD") outbreak in the Eastern Cape. Dr Shaun Morris, an industry expert, has also been consulted with regards to practical advice to limit the spread of the virus.

Currently two adjoining properties just outside Humansdorp and an associated farm in the Zuurveld area (which are being handled as one farming unit), have confirmed positive cases. These farms have been placed under quarantine and all animals have been vaccinated.

From the Eastern Cape Director of Veterinary Services, Dr Mnqeta and State Veterinarian, Dr Strydom, Agri EC have been informed of blood samples taken on Tuesday (14.05.2024) by the Dr Strydom, on a non-related farm 28km west of the initial infected farm for a suspected case in beef cattle. Results from the testing have been confirmed it to be a positive FMD case. Currently, no direct link has been identified between the original farms and the suspected farm. Currently in excess of 140 animals have tested positive.

The source of the identified SAT3 Virus is yet to be determined, and while this outbreak is being treated as an isolated incident, until the source has been identified, the possibility exists that this virus could be circulating elsewhere within the Province.

A Joint-Operations -Centre (JOC) has been set up by the Kouga Municipality and Agri EC joined in on the meeting that occurred on the 15.05.2024, with other relevant role players. Veterinary Services have created a priority farm list, which they are working on, order to take serological surveillance samples from farms surrounding the original sites as well as the suspected farm, in order to understand the extent of the spread.

Movement of Animals.

State Veterinary Services have advised of the following movement protocol and restrictions for any **CLOVEN-HOOFED** animals, INTO, WITHIN, THROUGH and OUT OF the Kouga and Koukamma Municipality which will be put in place from the time of the notices are published (see attached Directives):

Cloven-Hoofed Animals: Cattle, Pigs, Goats and Sheep.

As per the notice published by Dr Strydom, no person shall, except under the authority of a permit issued by the responsible State Veterinarian and otherwise than in accordance

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with the conditions specified in such permit, move any cloven-hoofed animals INTO, WITHIN, THROUGH and OUT OF the Kouga and Koukamma Municipality.

In terms of movement restrictions put in place by DRDAR as of the 17th of May 2024:

- **Only cloven-hoofed animals being moved from one farm within Kouga Municipality directly to an abattoir for slaughter will be allowed.** All animals being moved need to be inspected by the farm owner for any signs indicative of FMD before they move. Should any symptoms be noted, the State Vet Should be notified immediately.
- **Farms falling within a 10km radius of infected farms are to be bled and have a negative serological result before any movements are allowed from these farms** – the radius can be confirmed with the State Veterinarian and arrangements for bleeding can be made with him as well.
- **With regards to the movement of bull calves; where calves from more than one farm are transported together, this will only be allowed if the calves are transported by the farmer to the main road where they can be loaded onto the transport.** Here any personnel or vehicles are to be thoroughly disinfected before returning to the farm. No contact is to be made between calves already present on the transport and people who are to return to the farm. Calves are to be loaded from the furthest farm first and to move towards the abattoir, loading subsequent farms provided that the farms loaded first are not within a 10km radius of the infected farms. Should calves from within a 10km radius be loaded, these are to be done last and from lower risk to higher risk.
- **No cloven-hoofed animals originating in the Kouga and Koukamma Municipality are to be moved to other farms within or outside these Municipalities for the time being.**

Should any movement not meeting the above requirements be noted these must please be reported to your local Stock Theft as well as the State Vets Office.

The Agri EC 24hr Co-Ordination Centre may be contacted on 060 9974503, for reports to be forwarded and followed up upon by Stock-Theft and the State Vet.

All livestock must bear the owners official identification mark as per the Animal Identification Act (No 06 of 2002) before movement can be permitted. (This means your official AIDA mark, tattooed or branded as applicable with an animal serial number) and only abattoirs within the local State Vet Area (Koukamma, Kouga, NMBM, and Sundays River Valley) will be allowed to be used. Any movement of animals increases the risk of spread and should still be avoided if possible.

The animals from the infected farms will not be moved or go to slaughter for the next 6 months as there is no registered FMD abattoir in the area. There is currently only one FMD abattoir in the country which is situated in Phalaborwa. The Department and Industry are in discussion with regards to the establishment of a FMD abattoir within the Eastern Cape should the situation warrant it.

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The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) are engaging with Provincial Veterinary Services with regards to further movement restrictions, should the situation warrant it.

Members will be advised as soon as instructions in this regard are received. Agri EC and the EC RPO will be working with other industry groups and State Veterinary Services to facilitate the permit process and ensure that a 24hr contact service is available to the industry so that responsible movement can take place without compromising the situation further, in the most efficient manner. **See attached movement application procedure document.** This process will come into effect as soon as the DRDAR movement directives are circulated to producers and farmers.

Biosecurity.

Biosecurity, biosecurity, biosecurity!!! It is the landowner's responsibility to ensure strict biosecurity measures are put in place and adhered to. Experts have advised that biosecurity on farms and entry to your farm is the best measure to combat the spread of FMD. Below are on-farm biosecurity measures that landowners should institute.

On-farm biosecurity measures by landowners should be instituted, such as:

- Lock your gates, and limit visitors (by appointment only) and deliveries to the property. Preferably arrange meetings with agents and other parties off-farm.
- Any livestock trucks allowed onto your farm must be clean upon arrival and must be sprayed and disinfected on entry and exit. Do not allow a dirty truck/vehicle onto your property. When loading calves, don't allow any trucks onto your property, let the truck park on the main road and take a bakkie to load these animals. Workers assisting should be properly sanitised and a clean set of clothes/overall & shoes provided before re-entering the farm. Don't load calves on your property or allow the truck to enter your property.
- Do not split loads between farms.
- Do not walk cattle where trucks and vehicles drive. Have designated areas and routes for vehicles to prevent contact with animals and manure. Should this not be possible excess manure should be cleared from these areas and the area sprayed with a sanitising solution.
- Any person entering the farm should go through a footbath and sanitise their hands.
- Workers who return from leave must have a clean set of clothes and boots before entering the farm.
- Workers working with animals should be supplied with a plastic apron and a 2% citric acid solution to use in between working with one animal to another animal. The 2% citric acid solution is an instant contact killer. Workers should spray this

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solution on their hands in between working with one animal to another animal to prevent the spread from one animal to another.

- Be vigilant! Report clinical signs to the State Veterinarian or your private veterinarian immediately. Clinical signs include salivating, drop in milk, lameness, ulcers in the mouth, and sores on the tongue.
- Any animals moved onto your farm must be kept isolated for a minimum of 28-days before introducing them to your main herd.
- Animal Identification and Traceability is vitally important, no animals should be accepted onto your farm without a verifiable, traceable history of the movement of the animal and a health declaration.
- Apply good personal hygiene practices such as sanitise and cleaning hands regularly, with a good disinfectant such as F10 (diluted 1:125), or Virocid. Any virucidal disinfectant can be used but care must be taken that the correct dilution rates are used, and this solution is correctly applied. Trucks and bakkies must be cleaned first and then sanitised.
- Implement a waste manure management plan to prevent the spread of the disease.
- Train and educate staff on FMD biosecurity and protocols.
- The virus can exist within the human respiratory system for up to 48-hours and as such can be transmitted by humans between animals.

FMD is spread by animals and people, by implementing a comprehensive biosecurity program, you can significantly reduce the risk of introducing and spreading FMD on your farm.

A sample of biosecurity boards for farms designed by the National Animal Health Forum and RPO are attached hereto. Farmers may either have the boards printed themselves or the boards can be ordered and purchased from Agri EC - Lise Potgieter; marketing@agriec.co.za for orders.

Boards that can be purchased from Agri EC include: Chromadek (0.900m x 0.600m) at R350-00 (including VAT), and Correx (0.900m x 0.600m) at R300-00 (including VAT), the courier fee (approximately R125) will be charged to the farmer's cost or alternatively boards can be collected from the Agri EC Office.

Sanitising Roadblocks

In terms of sanitising roadblocks. Dr Mnqeta has advised that roadblocks are only instituted by Law Enforcement Agents authorised by the relevant legislation. There is a liability issue when civilians stop and pull over vehicles on provincial and national roads, without a law

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enforcement official. If farmers intend on setting up sanitising roadblocks, they should engage with Law Enforcement Agents to establish the roadblocks with their presence. Sanitising roadblocks may not be a successful preventative measure on their own. At the end of the day biosecurity on farms and at the farm gate are extremely important and is the responsibility of the landowners to ensure the correct measures are in place and are being followed on their properties.

Commonages and Roaming Animals

Agri EC are aware of the concerns raised regarding commonages and roaming animals, we have met with representatives of Kouga Municipality regarding this matter and have identified the risks involved. Agri EC will be meeting with Kouga Municipality next week to try put containment and identification procedures into place.

Auctions

Auctions where animals from multiple sellers are sold and transported to multiple buyers carry the biggest risk. As such, any livestock auctions taking place during this time must strictly adhere to and enforce the "Biosecurity rules for livestock auctions" (see attached), ensuring all protocols are in place to prevent any further infection or spread of the disease. To the best of our knowledge no auction facility within the Eastern Cape, has been certified in terms of the biosecurity audit and we urge auction facility owners and agents to give urgent attention to these conditions.

It is critical that animals can be individually identified, and all movement paperwork is correctly filled in and kept on hand to facilitate forward and backward tracing should it be required. A copy of the biosecurity rules for livestock agents can be obtained upon request from the Agri EC office.

Status Update regarding Export Permits

Dr Rozani has previously indicated that no live exports will take place out of the Eastern Cape unless the importing country is aware of the outbreak and has amended their importing permit to state that they are aware of the outbreak and have done a risk assessment.

This is currently the position, however, should there be a confirmed spread of FMD this position may be revised.

Conclusion

It is in the interest of all producers, agents, transporters, speculators and organisational representatives to work together to ensure that the source of the virus is identified and

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does not spread. Should this happen, further containment and movement restrictions will be considered by DALRRD.

Agri EC and the EC RPO will be working with other industry groups and State Veterinary Services to facilitate the permit process and ensure that a 24hr contact service is available to the industry so that responsible movement can take place without compromising the situation further, in the most efficient manner.

An official letter and explanation of the processes for permitting is attached hereto.

If members are unsure of clinical signs and are struggling to get hold of a veterinarian during this time and need to know if they have a possible case, Agri EC has been offered a service and producers are welcome to send pictures to the Agri EC 24hr Co-Ordination Centre which may be contacted on 060 9974503. The procedure to be followed in terms sending of pictures for veterinary advice, is as follows: Name and contact information of producer, coordinates of farm from which the pictures are being sent, date picture was taken, official AIDA mark/tattoo or brand mark as applicable with an animal serial number for each animal photographed.

For any further inquiries or correspondence please contact Megan Maritz: environment@agriec.co.za / 041 363 1890 / 063 781 8594. Or the EC RPO on the contact numbers provided in the signature block.

Kind regards,

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