



Agriculture & Rural Development

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Agriculture and Rural Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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MEDIA STATEMENT

**Att : ALL EDITORS
Media Houses**

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FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE CONTROL MEASURES IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Mahikeng – The North West Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has placed five farms on quarantine and forward traced farms on precautionary quarantine following Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in Potchefstroom at Dr Kenneth Kaunda District recently. Since the identification and confirmation of this outbreak in the area, a Joint Operations Centre (JOC) has been set up including amongst others a team of Veterinarians from the NWDARD, provincial disaster management office, farmer's unions and the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

The working team consisting of members from the Veterinary Services is currently in and around the area and all other farms which connects the original property to undertake inspections and collect samples where significant clinical signs are presented. The team is conducting inspections and surveillance through blood sampling in order to determine the extent of the spread.

The auction in Potchefstroom received 12 cattle from one of the infected farms and there was forward tracing from the auction to all farms of destination. About 217 cattle, sheep and goats that were sold at the Potchefstroom auction have all been traced to Gauteng (Vanderbijlpark, Westonaria, Kempton Park) Free State and North West (Ventersdorp and Potchefstroom) and the farms have been visited. Gauteng and Free State Veterinary Services have been informed. The names of the buyers are known to Veterinary Services unit of the North West province.

The department would like to call on animal farmers not to panic. The Veterinary Services team is hard at work to ensure that all precautionary measures are undertaken to prevent the further spread of the disease. The Department also urges farmers against vaccinating animals for Foot and Mouth Disease, as vaccines without authorization can result in vaccinated animals testing positive and being classified as infected resulting in further measures being imposed on the farm.

In the North West Province, vaccination of cattle and pigs against FMD is not permitted and is therefore illegal. The sale of such vaccines is also illegal. Vaccines that are used for this purpose need to be registered and authorized by the National Director Animal Health for such purpose and as such, they are only in the hands of government officials.

FMD is a highly contagious viral disease that affects all cloven hoofed animals of domestic and wild origin. It presents with sores in the mouth and in between the digits causing them to be depressed, reluctant to eat and be lame. The disease does not affect humans and meat from such animals is safe to eat when it has been treated in prescribed manner.

Farmers are advised to be on the lookout for clinical signs that resemble the disease and report them immediately to the nearest State Veterinary office.

Ends!

Issued by:

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