



This disease is caused by a virus (a very small germ). The virus is found in all body secretions of infected animals (saliva, urine, faeces, milk and in the air that is breathed out during sneezing or snorting).

- Animals get this disease when eating or breathing in the virus from these body secretions.
- In addition people can spread the virus *via* clothing, shoes, hands and car tyres.
- Outbreaks have occurred in cattle, pigs and impala in South Africa, but all cloven-hoofed animals can be affected.

What are the signs?

This disease is called foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) because sick animals develop sores on their feet and mouths. They may show the following signs:

- Blisters that are of different sizes and filled with fluid will appear in the mouth. These blisters can burst and leave raw sores, which soon heal. This is usually painful for the animals and they may not eat. The animals will lose condition.
- Because of the blisters animals may salivate, which is evident by drooling from the mouth.
- Blisters that will burst open and leave raw areas may also form at the skin-hoof junction. Animals may be lame in one or more feet. Sometimes they may lose their claws or hooves.
- Pigs can also develop these blisters on their snouts and on their “knees” or other bony parts of the body.



- Dairy cows develop sores on their teats and often have severe mastitis. This results in a sudden drop in milk production.
- Pigs and calves usually die.

Where does FMD occur?

FMD is present in most of the buffalo in the Kruger Park. These buffalo may infect other animals in the Park or in the surrounding farming areas. For this reason strict control measures are applied to prevent the disease from infecting farm animals. In these areas (redline areas) FMD is controlled by limiting the movement of animals by means of legal movement permits and the use of vaccines. Vaccinated animals are branded with an F and are not allowed to leave the redline area. The vaccinated cattle act as a shield to prevent the disease from spreading to the farm animals in that area.

Outbreaks of FMD can occur if carrier buffalo from the redline area are moved illegally to other parts of the country. Outbreaks can also occur if the FMD virus is brought into the country by illegally bringing in infected animals, animal products or swill. Swill is leftover food that can come from ships, trains and planes. It should never be fed to animals unless it has been thoroughly heated to a high temperature for at least 5 minutes. Untreated swill from a ship was fed to pigs and this caused the recent outbreak in Camperdown (KZN)



What to do in the case of an outbreak

There is no treatment for FMD

It is a controlled disease in South Africa. In the event of an outbreak the following is important:

- Cooperate with your local veterinarian, extension officer and animal health technician because FMD is a disease of national importance.
- If you see signs similar to FMD in your cattle or pigs during an outbreak, contact your local veterinarian, animal health technician or extension officer immediately.
- All movement of animals or animal products will be restricted. Animals or animal products will not be allowed to move in or out of the restricted zone.
- Animals in the restricted zone are usually destroyed to ensure that infected animals or carcasses do not spread the disease.
- Movement of animals or animal products in the area surrounding the restricted zone (the surveillance zone) will only be allowed if there is a legal movement permit. This can be obtained from the provincial veterinary office.
- Do not move your animals if they are in the restricted zone or the area surrounding the restricted zone. This will only result in the disease spreading.



Vaccination

Animals are vaccinated under very strict government control

Vaccination is administered in a limited area, and not on a wide scale, unless the disease becomes uncontrollable

No animal may be vaccinated without approval of the National Director: Veterinary Services

Why is FMD important?

It is very contagious, meaning that it spreads rapidly among animals

- There are different kinds of FMD viruses, which makes it difficult to control by using vaccines. The Kruger Park has three types of the FMD virus and one of these caused the outbreak in Mpumalanga. The outbreak in Camperdown was caused by another kind of FMD virus which had never been found in South Africa before.
- FMD has an impact on the economy of the country. Other countries will only buy South African products (animals and animal products as well as agricultural products) if they know that the country is free from FMD.

Compensation

Compensation will be paid for animals which have to be destroyed

Please note

People cannot normally get FMD

Meat and dairy products from an FMD infected animal are safe for human consumption, but not for animals

For further information contact your nearest animal health technician or state/private veterinarian

or

Animal Health for Developing Farmers
ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute
Private Bag X05, Onderstepoort 0110
Tel: (012) 529 9158 Fax: (012) 529 9427



or

Department of Agriculture, Resource Centre
Tel: (012) 319 7141 or 319 7085

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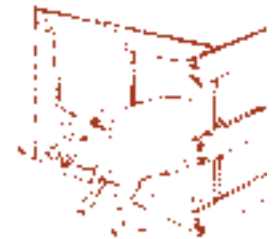
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Foot-and-mouth disease



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