



COMMEMORATION OF WORLD RABIES DAY

28 September 2023

The KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development commemorated World Rabies Day at Nkukhwini Sports Field in Nongoma on Thursday.

The emphasis during the awareness campaign was for pet owners to take the responsibility of vaccinating their pets, to prevent fatalities.

At least 15 people from KZN have died since 2021 and between January and September of 2023, the province has recorded 4 human deaths.

The majority of fatalities have occurred in eThekweni and those affected are children between 2 and 13 years old.

A recent death occurred last month in Nongoma where a 5-year-old boy was bitten by a stray dog. His family only took the child to a nearby hospital when he started displaying severe symptoms. However, he died upon arrival.

MEC Super Zuma pleaded with the community to vaccinate their pets to prevent further deaths.

Mr. Zuma said the contagious and dangerous viral disease was preventable and it was up to individuals to heed the call to vaccinate their pets.

“When pet owners have to take their pets for treatment of Rabies, it is a clear indication of negligence. Why wait to treat rabies when you can prevent the disease by vaccinating?”

We visited the family of the child who died here in Nongoma and his father was in tears saying it would have been better if the child had been killed by their dog.

“We have freely available vaccinations to all pet owners throughout the province but numbers are too low, a lot more pet owners should take advantage of the services provided to prevent both animal and human deaths,” said MEC Super Zuma.

Dr. Cameron Kotwane, a Veterinarian responsible for services within the Northern part of the province said KZN was challenged and to raise vaccination numbers, communal drives were vital.

“We want to mobilize communities and teach them about the dangers of the disease. It only takes applying precaution when you are beaten. You have to take care of the wound by ensuring that it is washed with soap under running water and you seek emergency treatment to ensure the manifestation of the disease,” said Dr Kotwane.

Inkosi EB Zulu encouraged the community to heed the call from the Department to vaccinate their pets.

“It is important that we do as we are being advised by experts to keep our families safe. We have to be vigilant of all the symptoms that have been mentioned so that we may be able to take necessary action to prevent unnecessary deaths,” said Inkosi EB Zulu.



















