



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA RELEASE

DATED: 26 JUNE 2025

NEW HOPE FOR KZN BEEF PRODUCERS AMID FMD

A four-year restriction on the sale and movement of cloven-hoofed animals and their products in the Zululand area has been eased for today's live animal auction at Diebe area in uLundi, Zululand District Municipality. The restrictions were forced by the outbreak of the Foot-and-Mouth Disease in 2021. The staging of the piloted auction was officially declared by the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Ms Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa as authorised by the latest Government Gazette number 6319, released on 13 June 2025, in accordance with the ANIMAL DISEASES ACT, 1984 (ACT NO. 35 OF 1984).

Addressing hundreds of community members attending the auction sale, kaMadlopha-Mthethwa said her Department has taken an important stride towards overcoming the challenges facing the industry. "This auction is particularly critical as it takes place amidst the ongoing challenges posed by the Foot and Mouth Disease in other Districts. FMD has far-reaching economic implications, negatively affecting both small-scale and commercial farmers."

"As the MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development in KwaZulu-Natal, it's my obligation and responsibility to ensure that we run the agricultural sector effectively. This means taking care of the farmers whether they're running privately-owned farms or communal livestock, we have to intervene if there are problems," said kaMadlopha-Mthethwa during the auction.

One hundred and sixty communal animals from 18 diptanks in the District went under the hammer. The outbreak of the FMD caused frustrations among commercial, small-scale farmers and communal farmers.

KaMadlopha-Mthethwa stated that staging the auction in the Zululand area, where there was FMD, proves there are no clinical cases of the disease in the region. "This proves that the province is gradually winning the war against FMD and the Veterinary Services work on the ground is yielding results. Although it's a huge challenge due to lack of infrastructure, the livestock industry has responded well by strengthening its biosecurity measures to prevent rapid spread of the disease. As part of containment efforts, veterinary personnel were increased on the ground, new disease management areas were declared, the affected areas were isolated and efforts were made until the disease was eradicated. Furthermore,



assistance was received from the police and Road Traffic Management Operations, as well traditional leaders."

KaMadlopha-Mthethwa urged farmers and the general communities to adhere to the strict protocols of the FMD as set out in the latest Government Gazette. "We had to ease pressure, as they haven't sold their livestock since 2022 after the outbreak of the disease. This is the first auction of its kind in Zululand, aimed at assisting communities facing challenges in selling due to the disease. This auction is specifically for registered sellers whose cattle have been identified. We expect buyers to adhere to government regulations and guidelines related to the auction as well as livestock management during the disease period. This includes taking the cattle to a designated facility dipping and keeping them isolated for 28 days or six weeks before slaughter at the abattoir. We urge everyone to follow these guidelines strictly, as even a single mistake could cause significant damage and undo our progress."

Currently, the Department's Veterinary Services are working to contain the outbreak by using all available resources to strictly control the movement of cloven-hoofed animals. Farms, pastures, feedlot and dip tanks that tested positive for FMD have been placed under quarantine and there are notable successes in Jozini and Dlebe where no animals have tested positive for the disease.

The Department of Agriculture, particularly livestock officers, have a significant task ahead to ensure that the majority of cattle, estimated at 3 million under livestock associations, are vaccinated. They see to it that all 2,207 dip tanks are functional. "I can assure you that all these dip tanks have dipping chemicals, although some are still being repaired in terms of infrastructure. Every year, we spend about R45 million on dip tank medication," concludes kaMadlopha-Mthethwa.

To this end the following is an account of advances made in partnership with all stakeholders:

Since the outbreak events (141) of the FMD in 2021 the Department's Veterinary Services embarked on an intensive intervention programme in 2022 and have vaccinated a total of 616 374 cattle to date.



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

FMD VACCINATIONS PER DISTRICT:

Zululand 211 975

UMkhanyakude 102 344

King Cetshwayo 194 566

Amajuba 44 101

UThukela 2 034,

UMzinyathi 23 978,

EThekwini 14 820,

ILembe 14 222 and

UMgungundlovu 8 334

The success of the Diebe auction sale will result in the programme being replicated in other districts.

For more information, please contact Vusi Khumalo at 082 350 4674
or Vusi Zuma at 079 259 6327