



KWAZULU-NATAL AGRICULTURE MEC ORDERS A TOTAL BAN ON ANIMAL MOVEMENTS AS SHE DISTRIBUTES FMD VACCINES

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mrs Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, has issued a stern warning to individuals involved in the illicit movement of animals amidst the severe outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in the province. The MEC briefed media at the Provincial Veterinary Laboratory - Allerton in Pietermaritzburg's Cascade area, where she oversaw the 200 thousand vaccines earmarked for mass vaccination in the UGu District. "We urge the public who continue to engage in cattle movement to stop doing that. This instruction applies to even those use cattle for ilobolo. As an alternative, online platforms may be used for dowry exchanges. We also request traditional leaders to advise their subjects against illegal movement of animals in their communal lands. We have to be harsh now so that people will see how serious we are in dealing with this. This disease is serious; we have to adhere to the animal control measures that have been put in place."

Regarding the vaccines, kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, pointed out that the veterinary services selected uGu and Harry Gwala districts for the Biogenesis Bago vaccines because these districts have not reported any cases of SAT 3 FMD virus, as the vaccine targets and neutralizes SAT 1 and SAT 2 viruses found in the cattle population in these districts, "Taking our mass vaccination drive to northern KwaZulu-Natal would have been ineffective and futile because these vaccines may fail to deal with SAT 3 FMD virus."

Dr. Kolisa Amanda Nokoyo, Deputy Director of Veterinary Diagnostics Services in KwaZulu-Natal, has expressed that the facility used for vaccine storage - Allerton Laboratory, will soon be upgraded to enable testing of all blood samples including that of suspicious foot and mouth disease cases, saying that once fully upgraded it will address the backlog of FMD results.

MASS VACCINATION ROLLOUT PLAN

Mass vaccination to start on 26 February 2026.

1. From the first batch of one million doses of the FMD vaccine, KwaZulu-Natal has received 200 000 doses.
2. The vaccines were collected from Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP) in Pretoria and KwaZulu-Natal portion are currently stored and monitored at the province's veterinary laboratory - Allerton Laboratory in Pietermaritzburg. Allerton Laboratory has sufficient cold rooms and back-up generators.
3. Both state and registered private veterinarians are now authorised to administer vaccines to speed up the campaign.
4. Private veterinarians are encouraged to register with the Department of Agriculture to assist in the rollout and expand the available workforce.
5. Vets team will be vaccinating 2,286 dip tanks within 4-6 months, covering the entire cattle population of about 2.4 million - both communal and commercial cattle;
6. Initiating vaccination in district municipalities bordering other provinces and countries; meaning that districts bordering other provinces and countries will be targeted first and then an inward movement will commence.
7. Deploying 45 teams on a daily basis, the team to assume extra personnel requested by veterinary; these 45 teams will be deployed per day targeting 45 locations and between 45 000-90 000 animals per day. This is guaranteed when the workforce currently being recruited is in full force.
8. Capturing owners' and animals' details into the Livestock Identification and Traceability System (LITS); Each vaccination team will consist of seven members i.e. three Animal Health Technicians and four data capturers all working hand in hand with livestock associations for the LITS programme.
9. The campaign is expected to start in uGu and then move to Harry Gwala districts.



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10. For commercial farms and feedlots, the department is working with private veterinarians and industry bodies like Kwanalu and the Red Meat Producers' Organisation (RPO) to monitor and facilitate the rollout.
11. The state will oversee the vaccination of commercial farms.

For more information on this, please contact Vusi Khumalo (MLO) at 082 350 4674.

ISSUED BY THE KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT