

## WATCH | ALL DAIRY CATTLE HAVE RECEIVED FMD VACCINE IN KZN

<https://witness.co.za/news/2026/05/05/all-dairy-cattle-in-kzn-have-been-vaccinated/>

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**MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development in KwaZulu-Natal, Thembeni KaMadlopha-Mthethwa officially handed over a fleet of new vehicles aimed at speeding the vaccination campaign in the province following the employment of 60 Animal Health Technicians**

KwaZulu-Natal's entire dairy herd has now been vaccinated, while efforts to immunise beef cattle are gaining momentum with a target of full coverage within six months.

This marks a major milestone in the province's fight to protect its livestock industry against Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD).

The breakthrough was confirmed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's chief director of veterinary services, Dr Temba Sikhakhane, during the official fleet handover and appointment of 60 Animal Health Technicians at Cedara College on Tuesday. Sikhakhane said the province has successfully completed vaccinations across all dairy cattle, with the focus now on the beef herd, which is being rolled out across all 11 districts.

We took a decision to work with the private sector to ensure that all commercial farmers are covered," Sikhakhane said.

Through this collaboration, we have been able to appoint private veterinarians to participate in the vaccination programme.

He revealed that just under 400 000 dairy cattle have been vaccinated, effectively completing that segment of the rollout.



Vaccination of the beef herd is ongoing, with more than 140 000 cattle already covered.

However, Sikhakhane acknowledged that intermittent vaccine shortages have slowed progress.

“We do run out of vaccines at times and have to wait for new supply, but we are making steady progress. With continued support from the Red meat Producers Organisation, we are aiming to vaccinate 100% of the beef herd within six months,” he said.

In total, about 800 000 animals have been vaccinated so far, out of an estimated provincial herd of 2.5 million.

“We are confident that within the next six months we will have vaccinated the entire commercial herd,” he said.

The vaccination campaign is currently focused on the Zululand District, where more than 113 000 cattle in AbaQulusi Municipality alone have been vaccinated. Sikhakhane noted that early signs of herd immunity are already emerging in the area.

“Our only major challenge is vaccine supply. With the additional personnel now on board, we are preparing to expand into uMgungundlovu District while finalising work in Zululand,” he said.

The 60 technicians who will assist in speeding up the vaccination program in the province were welcomed by the MEC Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa on Tuesday.

KaMadlopha-Mthethwa also handed over a fleet worth R21 million, which will be used by the new technicians and others in the department to speed up vaccination.

“I had said in this department, this is the year of the youth and promised to employ the youth to add to the veterinary services. I am happy we’ve employed 60 young people who will help in facing FMD head-on. Since January, we’ve employed over 400 young people in the province,” said KaMadlopha-Mthethwa.

She added that by the end of the month, the department would have finalised the employment of data capture and admin clerks.

“These technicians are needed more than before by our communities because livestock is important. Since the vaccine arrived, people are happy. We are running short of dipping tanks even though we have dipping chemicals, but we are attending to that,” she said