

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: South Africa Attempts to Control Foot and Mouth Disease Outbreaks

Country: South Africa - Republic of

Post: Pretoria

Report Category: Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

On April 11, the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development announced that the country is battling 56 outbreak cases of the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) involving farms and communal areas in the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, North West and Gauteng. According to the DALRRD Animal Health Directorate, the outbreaks currently troubling South Africa were caused by illegal movements of animals out of the FMD controlled zones in Limpopo. Following the loss of the OIE recognized FMD-free status in January 2019, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) negotiated agreements with trading partners on the export of safe commodities, including heat-treated meat and dairy products, deboned and matured beef, scoured wool, salted hides and skins and livestock embryos. Although these agreements allowed for a trade continuation, China and Mozambique have implemented trade restrictions.

Background

On April 11, the Minister for the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development announced that the country is battling 56 outbreak cases of FMD involving farms and communal areas in the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, North West and Gauteng.

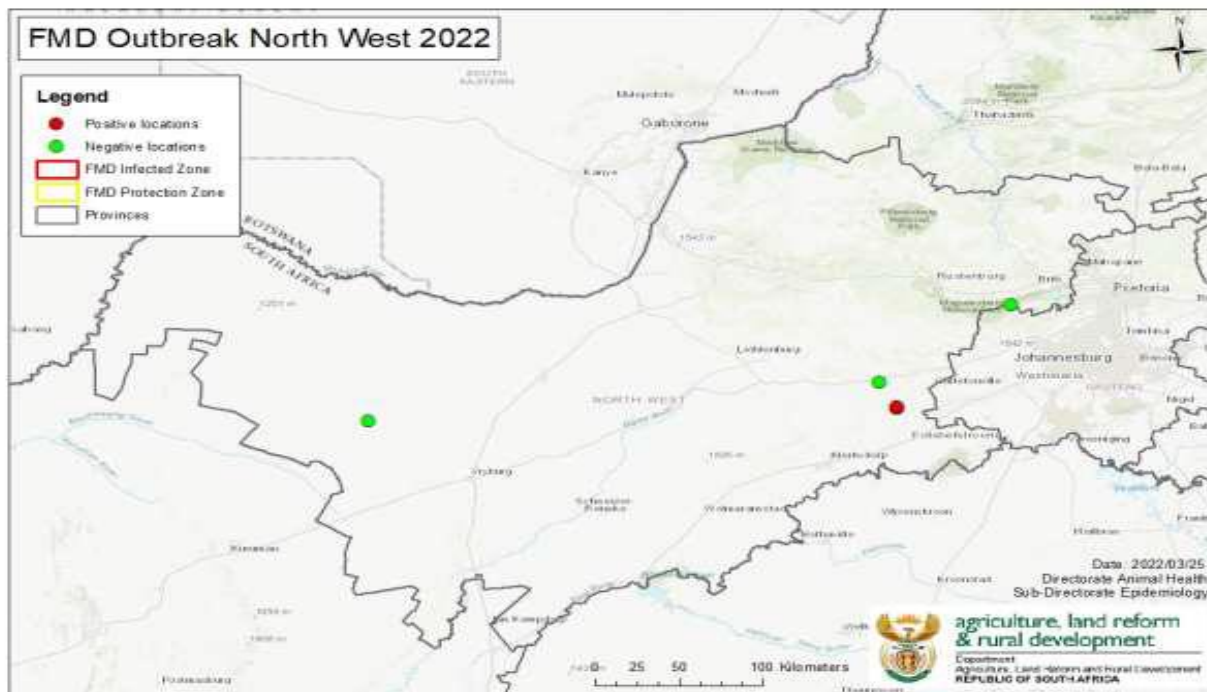
According to the DALRRD Animal Health Directorate, the outbreaks currently troubling South Africa were caused by illegal movements of animals out of the FMD controlled zones in Limpopo. Despite the fact that South Africa lost its OIE recognized FMD free zone status in 2019 (see: <https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/south-africa-fmd-outbreak-leads-bans-imports-red-meat-south-africa>), the permanent movement restrictions remain in place in the FMD protection zones in Limpopo and Mpumalanga and it is illegal to move cloven-hoofed animals and their products out of the FMD protection zone without permission from the state veterinary services.

Foot and Mouth Disease Outbreak in Gauteng, Free State, North West, Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal

On March 22, 2022, the South African Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) confirmed a case of a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) on a commercial stud farm in the North- West Province. The animals exhibited clinical signs consistent with FMD, including salivation, mouth, and coronary band erosions. The Provincial Veterinary Services conducted epidemiological investigations and positive laboratory results confirmed the diagnosis between Potchefstroom and Ventersdorp. The investigation further found that the FMD virus had spread to adjacent farms within a 10-kilometer radius.

Furthermore, on March 25, 2022, FMD positive farms were also detected in Gauteng and the Free State provinces through trace-forward from an auction near Potchefstroom, which took place in March 2022 and from direct sales from infected farms before the infections were detected. There are currently seven positive farms linked to this outbreak event, involving five farms in the North West, one farm in Gauteng and one farm in the Free State.

Map 1: North-West FMD Outbreak



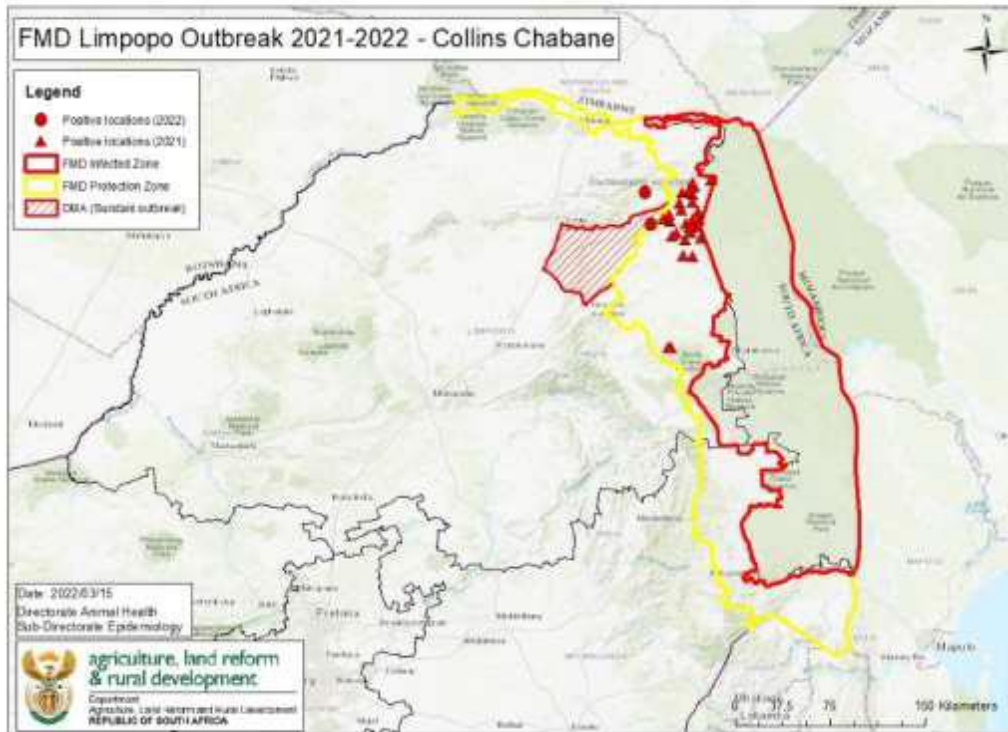
Source: Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak continues

Additionally, an outbreak of FMD was detected in the previous FMD- free zone in Collins Chabane municipality (Vhembe) in Limpopo Province in March 2022. Infection was detected in two locations in the former FMD free zone and involves cattle in communal grazing areas. One of the two new infected locations is in Collins Chabane, in the Limpopo Disease Management Area (LP DMA), which was declared in January 2019 and remains in place, while the other infected location is in Thulamela to the north of the DMA. Other locations in the area with clinical signs suggestive of FMD are under investigation. According to whom? This outbreak is most likely due to spill-over from an outbreak in the adjacent FMD Protection zone, which was detected in March 2021.

Based on surveillance activities conducted in the second half of 2021, it appeared at the time that the infection had come to an end. However, it resurfaced in 2022 in the former FMD free zone. Surveillance activities in the newly affected area are underway to determine the extent of the spread of the disease both within the DMA and to the north of the DMA.

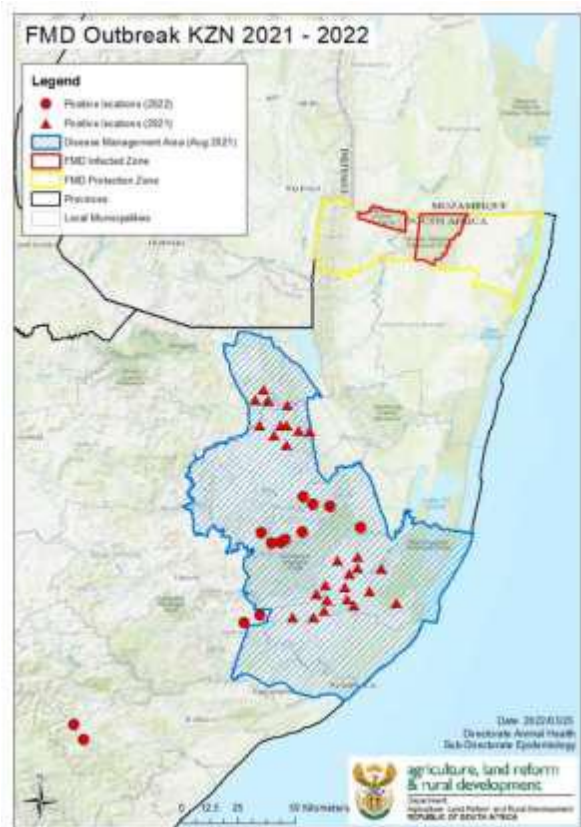
Map 2: Limpopo Province FMD outbreak and DMA



Source: Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

The FMD outbreak in the KwaZulu Natal province started in May 2021(see: <https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/south-africa-foot-and-mouth-disease-outbreak-kwazulu-natal-province>) and it is ongoing. Two new affected locations were identified. One falls just outside of the DMA in the Mthonjaneni municipality, while the other one falls some distance to the southwest of the DMA, in the uMlalazi municipality (near the Nkandla and Maphumulo municipalities).

Map 3: KwaZulu-Natal FMD outbreak.



Source: Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

Epidemiological investigation

The outbreak in Vhembe district in Limpopo Province was caused by a SAT 3 virus. This outbreak is most likely due to spill-over from an outbreak in the adjacent FMD Protection zone, which was detected in March 2021 where 28 outbreaks were reported.

In KwaZulu Natal Province, epidemiological investigations to date have not revealed a plausible source for the outbreak. However, the virus responsible for the outbreak is a SAT 2 serotype and is closely related to a SAT 2 virus responsible for an outbreak that occurred in the Protection Zone in northern Limpopo Province in 2019. It is therefore most likely that illegal movement of animals from the Protection Zone in Limpopo to KZN Province, may be the cause of the outbreak in KZN. Further analysis confirmed that the same SAT3 virus in Limpopo province is responsible for the outbreaks in the Free State, North West and Gauteng.

Control measures implemented

All affected farms, dip tanks and other premises in the five affected provinces were placed under quarantine and no cloven-hoofed animals are allowed to move from these locations. There has been no change in the movement restrictions on cloven-hoofed animals, their products and genetic material out

of, into, within or through the disease management areas, which are still in effect in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo.

The newly identified infected dip tanks in the KwaZulu Natal DMA were placed under quarantine and movement control measures also remain in place in the DMA. Serological and clinical surveillance is ongoing to determine the extent of spread of the disease. Roadblocks and Visible Veterinary Patrols continue to monitor movements of animals within, through and out of the DMA. A vaccination campaign commenced on 15 March 2022 in the areas where there appears to be active virus circulation. A risk-based approach is followed, to ensure that the areas at highest risk are vaccinated first.

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development declared a Disease Management Area (DMA) in the KwaZulu-Natal Province in the Government Gazette No.44783 on 30 June 2021, which was reduced in size on 7 September 2021, as declared in the Government Gazette No. 45109.

Following the resurgence of the outbreaks in January 2022, and subsequent spread of the disease beyond the margins of the DMA, the margins of the KZN DMA is being reconsidered to include all areas with positive locations or perceived to be at high risk of infection due to being epidemiologically linked. In the meantime, the individual locations are being quarantined.

Culling, like all control measures, will be considered on a case-by-case basis, considering the practicality, costs, advantage and disadvantage of each scenario.

Trade Implications

Following the loss of the OIE recognized FMD-free status in January 2019, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) negotiated agreements with trading partners on the export of safe commodities, including heat-treated meat and dairy products, deboned and matured beef, scoured wool, salted hides and skins and livestock embryos.

Most trade partners have thus far still retained the negotiated agreements for these commodities, based on the guarantees provided for processing to ensure inactivation of the virus. South Africa is also confident to certify the safety of pigs, pig semen, raw pork, and pork products from known FMD-free pig compartments. Communication efforts are conducted to keep trade partners up to date with the disease situation in the country as well as the implementation of control measures to contain the disease.

On April 6, 2022, China announced a restriction on the import of all cloven-hoofed animals and their products from South Africa due to an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in five provinces. The exports can resume only once several new measures were implemented as required by China. These measures included registration of facilities to export to China and inactivation of the FMD virus, as detailed by the World Organization for Animal Health.

On March 24, 2022, Mozambique suspended imports of cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, their meat and by-products, plus wild cloven-hoofed ruminants, and fodder for feeding cattle from South Africa. The provision does not prohibit the import of pasteurized dairy products (milk, cheese, yoghurt, and cream), heat-processed meats (canned goods and sausages) or pharmaceutical substances. The ban covers products from South Africa's North West, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

Attachments:

No Attachments.