



DEPARTMENT:
AGRICULTURE

Foot-and-mouth — D I S E A S E —



Let us work together to
control
the disease

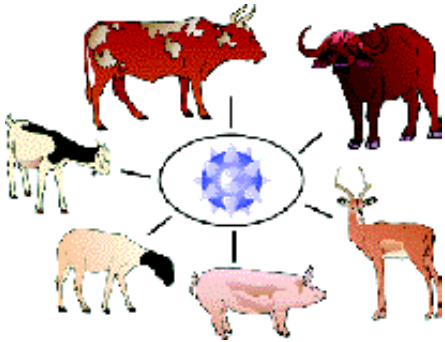
S.Y. Manger



Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) is caused by a germ called a virus. This germ is found in all body

secretions of infected animals (saliva, urine, faeces, milk and even droplets from sneezing and snorting).

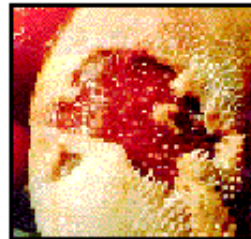
Animals get sick from FMD when eating or breathing in the germs from these body secretions.



All cloven-hooved animals can be affected

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF FMD?

This disease is called foot-and-mouth disease because sick animals mostly get sores on their feet and in their mouths. They may show the following signs:



Sores on tongue

◆ Blisters that are of different sizes and filled with fluid will appear in the mouth, mostly on the tongue. The blisters burst open and leave raw sores, which soon heal. This is usually painful



for the animals and they may not eat. These animals will lose condition.

◆ Because of the blisters animals may salivate, which is evident by drooling from the mouth.



Sores on feet

◆ Blisters may also form at the skin-hoof junction that will also burst open and leave raw areas. Animals may be lame in one or more feet. Sometimes they may lose their claws or hooves.

◆ Pigs can also develop these blisters on their snouts and on their "knees" or other bony parts of the body.

◆ Dairy cows develop sores on their teats and often have severe mastitis. This results in a sudden drop in milk production.

◆ Death may occur in young animals.

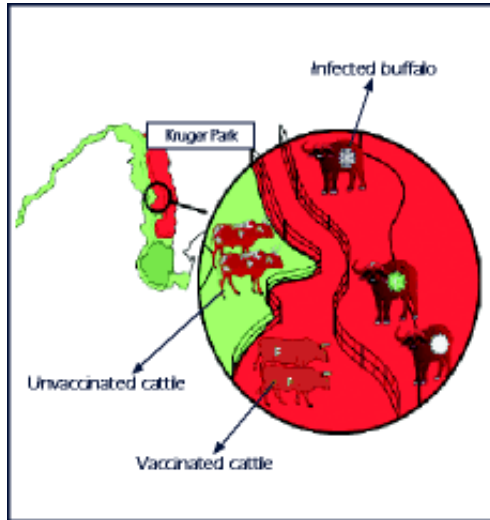


Sores on snout

WHERE DOES FMD OCCUR?

FMD is present in most of the buffalo in the Kruger Park (KP). The buffalo do not show any signs of the disease but they may infect other animals in the KP or in the surrounding farming areas. Therefore, strict control measures are used to prevent FMD from infecting farm animals. In the areas surrounding the KP (called the redline area) FMD is controlled by limiting movement of animals by the

use of legal movement permits and vaccinations. Vaccinated animals are branded with an F on the right side of the neck and are not allowed to leave the redline area. The vaccinated cattle act as a shield to prevent the disease from spreading to farm animals.



Outbreaks of FMD can occur if carrier buffalo or infected animals from the redline area are moved illegally into other parts of South Africa where animals are not being vaccinated against FMD. Outbreaks can also occur if the FMD germ is allowed into the country by illegally bringing in infected animals, animal products or swill. Swill is leftover food that can come from ships, trains and planes. This should never be fed to animals. This is how the recent outbreak in Camperdown (KwaZulu-Natal) occurred. Swill from hotels or restaurants within the country may be fed to animals provided it has been cooked for at least 60 minutes.

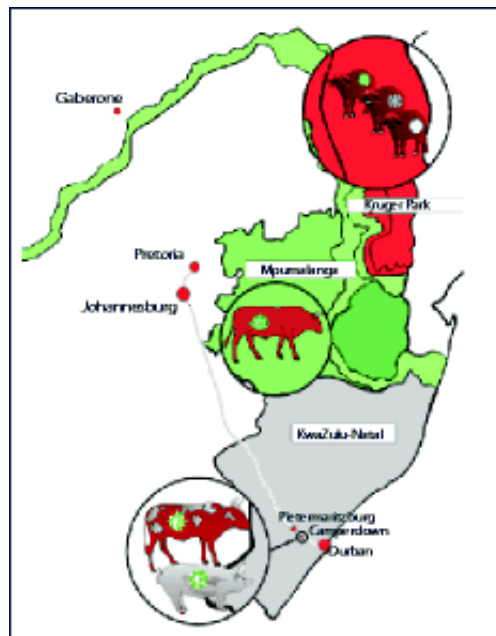
Depending on where outbreaks of FMD occur, different control strategies are applied. If the disease is not widespread and in farming areas where FMD has not occurred before, animals are killed and the carcasses destroyed. In these cases farmers are paid the market value of the animal or products

destroyed, or given new animals as compensation. In the redline area cattle are vaccinated every 6 months. If an outbreak occurs in the redline area, animals are simply vaccinated again and left to recover. These animals may not be removed from the redline area anyway.

People in the areas surrounding an outbreak may suffer for a period while quarantine measures are in place because they cannot move or sell their animals or animal products.

WHY IS FMD IMPORTANT?

- It is **VERY** contagious and spreads rapidly among animals
- There are different types of the FMD germ (virus) which makes it difficult to control by using vaccines. The Kruger Park has 3 types of the FMD germ (virus) in the buffalo population.



One of these types has been found in the outbreak in Mpumalanga. The outbreak in Camperdown was caused by another type of FMD germ (virus) which has never before

been found in South Africa.

- **FMD plays an economic role in the country. Other countries will only buy South African products (animals and animal products as well as agricultural products) if they know that our country is free of FMD.**

WHAT TO DO IN THE CASE OF AN OUTBREAK

There is no treatment for FMD. It is a controlled disease in South Africa. In the event of an outbreak the following is important:

- **Cooperate with your animal health technician, veterinarian or extension officer, because FMD is a disease of national importance.**
- **If you see signs similar to FMD in your cattle or pigs, contact your local animal health technician, veterinarian or extension officer immediately.**
- **All movement of animals or animal products will be restricted. Animals or animal products should not be moved into or out of or within the restricted zone.**

**LET US WORK TOGETHER TO CONTROL THE
DISEASE!**

**For further information contact your
animal health technician, state or private
veterinarian or
Animal Health for Developing Farmers
ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute
Private Bag X05, Onderstepoort 0110**



Information provided by
Animal Health for Developing Farmers
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This information is available on the web: www.nda.agric.za/publications

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