



Industry Briefing Note

October, 2022

Foot & Mouth Disease

Producer Awareness, Preparedness & Prevention

What is Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)

Foot and Mouth Disease is a highly contagious viral infection of cloven-hoofed animals including cattle, pigs and sheep. **Canada is free of Foot and Mouth Disease.** This virus is the greatest health threat to Canadian livestock. An incursion would be economically and socially devastating because a single case in Canada would lead to immediate border closure to all meat and live animal trade from susceptible animals.

Protecting Canada's FMD-Free status requires constant vigilance. Cattle producers have an opportunity to help protect our industry through biosecurity and emergency response plans.

What you need to know:

- **How is FMD transmitted?**
 - FMD usually spreads through close contact between infected animals
 - FMD can also spread by aerosol (inhalation) or ingestion (eating contaminated feed).
 - If an outbreak of FMD occurred in Canada, the virus could spread rapidly due to routine livestock movements
- **What are the signs and symptoms of FMD in cattle?**
 - High fever and depression
 - Decreased milk yield
 - Blisters in the mouth causing drooling or chomping
 - Blisters on the feet causing lameness or reluctance to move
 - Blisters on the udder and teats
 - Death in young animals
- **What to do if you suspect FMD**
 - Stop all movements
 - Stop entry and exit of people, vehicles and animals from your premises
 - Contact your local veterinarian immediately
 - Enact your farm-level emergency response plan



Producer Awareness, Preparedness & Prevention cont.

Mitigating International Risks

Many countries in the world are FMD-positive including areas of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Indonesia is fighting an active outbreak of FMD.

Canada has extensive plans to **PREVENT** FMD from entering our country. Never circumvent controls imposed by Canada Border Services Agents. Always declare when you have been on a farm internationally or are returning to a farm in Canada. Be mindful of internationally imported goods you are bringing on-farm. FMD virus can survive in cured meats, animal products such as wool or hair, and on contaminated objects including footwear and farm equipment.

- **Precautions for international travel or welcoming international visitors:**
 - Everyone, including family, workers and visitors must wear clean clothes and boots dedicated to your farm or ranch.
 - It is good practice to provide visitors with footwear and coveralls when on your ranch.
 - At a minimum, footwear should be disinfected.
- **High risk travel – Requirements when returning from a country where FMD has been detected.**
 - Know the FMD-status of the country of departure. If in doubt, assume the worst.
 - Returning travelers should ensure all clothing and footwear worn during visits abroad are free from soil or manure.
 - Clothes should be dry-cleaned and, if dry-cleaning is not an option, they should be thoroughly washed and dried at high temperatures.
 - Disinfect footwear that has been worn internationally prior to access to your operation. Ideally, footwear worn in other countries should not be worn around livestock in Canada.
 - Travelers who have been in countries with a reported foreign animal disease outbreak should avoid direct contact with livestock for five (5) days upon arrival back to Canada, fourteen (14) days if in close contact to an FMD outbreak.
- **How to disinfect clothing, footwear or other objects:**
 - Dry cleaning is effective and the best choice for clothing.
 - Objects that cannot be dry cleaned should be washed thoroughly to remove all organic material then soaked in a disinfectant solution. Always mix disinfectants at the label concentration and apply for the proper time.
 - Common household products that are effective include:
 - 50 percent water and 50 percent vinegar for 30 minutes.
 - 100 g of sodium carbonate (washing soda) per litre of water for 30 minutes; or
 - 2 g of citric acid powder per litre of water for 30 minutes.
 - Contact your local veterinarian for additional products that are effective.



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Emergency Preparedness:

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has **PREPAREDNESS** plans to detect and respond to any incursion of FMD. As producers, we have the same responsibility. Producers with a strict biosecurity plan are significantly more likely to prevent their farm from infection in the case of an incursion. Farm level biosecurity is our opportunity to contain and control disease spread.

Review biosecurity on your operation:

In preparation:

- Complete a farm-level emergency response plan
- Review your biosecurity protocols including those you use day to day and those you would invoke in an emergency
- Train all staff on emergency management plans
- Educate your team members on the signs of FMD

If FMD is detected in North America, immediately:

- Prohibit any livestock movements on or off the operation
- Enact plans for any animals in transit
- Do not visit other livestock operations or co-mingling sites
- Clean and disinfect vehicles, equipment & tools before entry and exit
- Limit interactions with other producers and industry contacts
- Increase animal health monitoring and review reporting procedures
- Re-educate all personnel on disease symptoms and transmission and how to report concerns
- Review operation-specific biosecurity plans and enact emergency response plans

Useful resources:

[Resources – Animal Health Emergency Management \(AHEM\) project](#)



[Foot-and-Mouth Disease - Canadian Food Inspection Agency \(canada.ca\)](#)

