Report on the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in KwaZulu Natal

Report date: 23 September 2011

On the 1st of February 2011, the KwaZulu-Natal Veterinary Services performed routine sampling for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) within the FMD Protection Zone and just outside the FMD Protection Zone in the northern part of the KwaZulu-Natal Province (KZN). On the 11th of February 2011, the samples came back positive for SAT-1 and SAT-3 on Liquid-phase blocking ELISA. The non-structural protein (NSP) ELISA tests were all negative and no clinical signs were seen.

A surveillance campaign to test the surrounding diptanks was launched and several other diptanks were found to be positive. On the 2nd of March 2011, the first positive NSP results were received.

The most western and southern positive sampling point was the Gwegwede diptank, north of the Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Nature Reserve, close to the town of Hlabisa.

Several suspect sampling points, with single low positive samples, were found. These were all retested and found to be negative.

In total, 46 sampling points around the most northern part of KZN were found to be positive on serology, and one location, in a feedlot in Gauteng, was found to be positive. Close to 270 sampling points from all over KZN were found to be negative for FMD on serology.

To date no clinical signs have been seen. SAT-1 FMD virus has been isolated from samples taken from cattle at the Gauteng feedlot (animals originating from the infected area in the KZN Province) and from one of the diptanks in the infected area. A SAT-3 FMD virus has been isolated from buffalo in the Ndumo Game Reserve. All suspect cattle and in-contact animals in the Gauteng feedlot were slaughtered out.

As a result of on-going surveillance, the Directorate found no evidence of circulating virus and the roadblocks were removed and movement restrictions, with the exception of live cloven hoofed animals, eased.

The Directorate of Animal Health is not aware of any active Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in South Africa. The Directorate has on-going surveillance programme in place and all suspect cases are immediately followed up; so far there has not been
reason to believe there is infection or illegal movements out of the Foot and Mouth Disease Control Zone.

Maps to illustrate the affected areas, as well as the FMD Control Zones.

I. Originally, an extensive infected zone and a protection zone in KZN were declared, as indicated in Map 1 below:

Map1: Original FMD infected zone and protection zone in KZN
II. During June 2011, a smaller infected and protection zone was implemented. (See Map 2 below):

Map 2: Proposed infected and Protection zones
III. The diptanks that were tested during the FMD campaign in the Kwazulu-Natal Province, are shown in Map 3 below:

Map 3: FMD positive and negative sampling points in KZN
IV. The new proposed FMD Control Zones for South Africa, after the changes that were made to it in Kwazulu-Natal Province, are shown below in Map 4:

Map 4: Proposed FMD Control Zones for South Africa