



Foot and Mouth Disease

Foot and mouth disease (FMD) viral fragments were recently discovered on imported dried pork “floss” in Australia. There’s no indication that this creates heightened risk to New Zealand. Viral fragments are not infectious and cannot transfer live virus to another animal.

The economic consequences of the introduction of FMD are likely to be catastrophic for our industry, due to the suspension of animal product exports.

The Meat Industry Association, alongside other primary sector groups, is working closely with the Ministry for Primary Industries to ensure New Zealand is well prepared and taking every practical step possible to prevent FMD entering the country.

The New Zealand border is generally well managed and the risk of FMD entering is extremely low. There are currently no direct flights from Indonesia and passengers effectively need to go through two borders with some of the strictest systems in the world (Australia and New Zealand) to get here.

All mail products that come into New Zealand from Indonesia are also x-rayed and checked by dogs. Quarantine officers are checking all cargo containers coming from Indonesia.

However, the Government has taken steps to strengthen New Zealand’s borders by implementing the following measures:

- Disinfecting footmats for arrivals from Indonesia
- Travellers to New Zealand are not allowed to bring in uncooked meat products
- Travellers are no longer permitted to bring in any meat products from Indonesia

WHAT MIA IS DOING



- Supporting MPI’s FMD Task Force to improve readiness for FMD in the unlikely event that there is an outbreak
- Recommending increased surveillance and compliance activity around swill/waste feeding regulations for pigs, which is well recognised as a risk pathway for the disease if border measures fail
- Reviewing our own industry biosecurity emergency plan





ADVICE FOR FARMERS

- Anyone concerned about their animals' health, especially symptoms including high fever, mouth and feet blisters or erosions and lameness, should call their veterinarian or the Ministry for Primary Industries' (MPI) exotic pest and disease hotline (0800 80 99 66)
- Farmer should remember to keep up-to-date NAIT records. As the Mycoplasma bovis response has shown, recording all animal movements helps the speedy tracing of animals in the event of a biosecurity incursion
- In addition to cattle and deer, FMD can infect pigs, sheep and goats and movements of these animals are not included in NAIT but are covered by Animal Status Declarations (ASDs)
- Instead of using paper-based ASDs for every movement, sheep and beef farmers should use the electronic ASD (eASD) functionality provided by OSPRI for all livestock species. This is particularly important for sheep, which are not included in NAIT
- Have robust on-farm biosecurity plans in place
- Keep overseas visitors away from stock for a week after their last contact with animals overseas

PALM KERNEL EXPELLER (PKE)

Concerns have been raised about the importation of Palm Kernel Expeller. MPI has conducted a thorough in-person audit of all the facilities producing PKE and exporting to NZ.

Before the FMD outbreak, the PKE exporters were already operating at a level considered acceptable for a nation where FMD is present – the audits have confirmed they are continuing to operate to this standard. Few, if any, of the PKE facilities had livestock in the vicinity.



STEPS IN EVENT OF OUTBREAK

MPI will:

- Put in place an initial and immediate National Livestock Standstill on the movements of susceptible species
- Immediately suspend all exports of livestock products
- Put in place restrictions and conditions on the movement of risk goods and risk activities in relation to infected places, at-risk places and places in any containment zone
- Establish a FMD Governance Board. It will be accountable for the strategic direction of the response, setting strategic response objectives and outcomes, as well as ensuring these remain appropriate. Members of the FMD Governance Board will be responsible for the outcome of the response. They have executive oversight of the response, make strategic decisions and identify strategic risks. Sirma Karapeeva will represent MIA on the Board
- Support biosecurity measures put in place by industry bodies for susceptible species
- Identify and inspect all locations associated with infected places that are potential sources or destinations for the virus (at-risk places)
- Inspect reported cases of FMD
- Locate and manage all infected places
- Find, decontaminate or destroy all potentially infected conveyances (for example, stock transporters), places, products or other risk goods
- Establish a clear picture of the means of infection, time and place of the primary case of FMD and subsequent spread. This would inform management decisions such as where to inspect premises
- Accurately describe the disease status and response actions in national and international reports and official certification

- Undertake surveillance to support a declaration of freedom

The length of a response is unknown. It will take at least two weeks for MPI to determine the extent of the outbreak (due to the disease's incubation period before symptoms manifest). Because of this, a response is likely to be at least a month in duration.

After the last infected animal has been killed, New Zealand still has to wait for three months before submitting to the World Organisation for Animal (OIE) and providing appropriate evidence to regain FMD-free status. However, even with OIE declaring NZ to be FMD-free three months after the last animal is killed, it is likely to take more time to re-open markets.



INDUSTRY CONTINGENCY FUND

The New Zealand sheep and beef sector exports over 90% of what we produce and we are very vulnerable to market restrictions or loss of international consumer confidence that might result from an FMD outbreak in NZ.

The New Zealand Meat Board has a contingency fund of \$61 million for a fundamental crisis such as this.

This fund is not to respond to the outbreak itself but rather to help restore any lost export market access, and rebuild consumer confidence or product reputation through marketing, advocacy or other means.



FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact:

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Further advice on FMD for farmers and livestock owners is available at mpi.govt.nz