

# FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE

The PCR – Enterovirus test is a laboratory test used to detect viral genetic material linked to Foot and Mouth Disease.



## NEWSLETTER

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) is currently affecting parts of Eswatini and has led to increased veterinary controls, vaccination campaigns, and restrictions on livestock movement. Because the disease spreads very quickly between animals.

According to the **Ministry of Agriculture** and regional animal-health authorities, thousands of animals are currently under surveillance, with more than 200,000 cattle vaccinated as part of the national response.

The situation has also drawn attention from regional bodies and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) due to the economic risks linked to uncontrolled outbreaks.

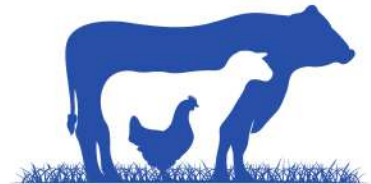
Even when only one animal is affected, Foot and Mouth Disease can have serious consequences for a farm. Infected cattle often lose weight, reduce milk production, and require additional care. More importantly, once the disease is suspected, farmers may no longer be able to move or sell livestock for a period of time.

For many farmers, especially small and communal farmers, these restrictions can mean:

- 1 Interrupted income from livestock sales
  - 2 Extra costs linked to feeding and animal care
  - 3 Delays in restocking or planned farm activities
- During recent outbreaks, farmers reported that livestock sales stopped suddenly when movement controls were introduced, creating immediate financial pressure.



### Understanding the legal expectation



Foot and Mouth Disease is classified as a controlled animal disease in Eswatini. This means that suspected cases must be reported or tested so that veterinary services can respond quickly and provide guidance. It is important to emphasise that this obligation is not about blaming farmers. Early reporting and testing **help veterinary authorities**:

- 1 Confirm whether FMD is present
- 2 Limit the spread to nearby farms
- 3 Protect the wider farming community

Prompt action enables support measures such as advice, vaccination, and biosecurity guidance to be implemented sooner. Early detection remains one of the most effective ways to protect individual farms, neighbouring communities, and the national herd.

*It is a reliable method used during outbreaks to confirm infection early.*

When animals showing symptoms are not tested, the disease can spread quietly before it is detected. This increases the risk of wider outbreaks, longer movement restrictions, and extended market closures. In addition:

- Neighbouring herds may be affected through **shared grazing or water points**.
- **Restrictions may remain in place longer than necessary if outbreaks are not clearly identified**.
- **Although FMD does not pose a serious health risk to people, humans can carry the virus on shoes, clothes, tools, or vehicles, spreading it between farms without realising it.**

## HOW TESTING BENEFITS YOUR FARM

Testing plays a key role in protecting farmers and restoring normal activity as quickly as possible. By confirming whether signs are linked to Foot and Mouth Disease, farmers can take the right action early.



## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS FARMERS SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR?

Lameness or difficulty walking

Blisters or sores in the mouth

Fever, weakness, or reluctance to move



Excessive salivation or drooling

Sores between the hooves

Sudden drop in milk production

### WE CAN COME 2 YOU

#### The test involves:

1. A simple swab sample taken from the animal
2. Early detection, even before severe symptoms appear
3. Accurate confirmation to guide next steps

## CONTACT US TO ORGANISE A PCR TEST