



agriculture,
forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Media Statement

05 February 2020

MINISTER DIDIZA REASSURES PARLIAMENT THAT FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASES SITUATION IN LIMPOPO IS UNDER CONTROL AND THE BAN ON GATHERINGS OF CLOVEN HOOFED ANIMALS REMAINS IN PLACE.

Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Minister, Ms Thoko Didiza, MP yesterday appeared before the portfolio committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to brief them on progress regarding the Foot and Mouth disease outbreak in Molemole Municipality, Limpopo.

The Minister assured members of the committee that the veterinary services team is doing everything possible to ensure the situation does not cause any further economic harm. Since the outbreak, in November 2019, the team has followed up on over 140 properties with possible links to specific auctions and affected properties. To date 130 properties have been investigated, and precautionary quarantine notices lifted on 87 properties.

Minister Didiza further shared with members, the matrix that links the two implicated auction houses to affected properties, demonstrating the complexity of this outbreak and the risk that congregations of animals of unknown health status poses. This risk does not only apply to Foot and Mouth disease; it has been demonstrated that the recent African swine fever outbreak had the same mode of spread. Other diseases such as Tuberculosis, Brucellosis, Bovine Leucosis, to name a few, have also been highlighted as risks livestock owners should be careful of when buying from sources whose health status is unknown.

“We do not take the decision to ban all gatherings lightly, and we are fully aware of the economic as well as social implications of these measures, I assure you that it is meant to be temporary in order to curb the spread of the disease, and this remains the intention” said Minister Didiza.

The Minister further confirmed that so far, 18 positive cases have been confirmed and reported to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). All of these cases are in Limpopo province with links, direct and indirect, to the two identified auctions. Slaughter of cattle from affected properties has commenced and this is closely monitored by the Provincial Veterinary Authorities.

Minister also highlighted capacity and concurrent functions as some of the challenges in managing animal health and controlling disease outbreaks.

“I note the concerns raised by the portfolio committee on the ban on auctions and I will engage the with the steering committee on Foot and Mouth on the uplifting of the ban sooner for their consideration” said Minister Didiza.

Minister Didiza wishes to assure all citizens that the meat, and other products from FMD infected cattle is safe for human consumption and any products which are discarded from the slaughterhouse is purely to manage the disease and prevent further spread.

Consumers are therefore reminded to only buy meat from reputable outlets as it would have gone through meat inspection and certified fit for human consumption.

For media enquiries please contact the Media Liaison Officer Mr Reggie Ngcobo on 0828832458

Issued by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development