



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY

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**POLICY STATEMENT BY JOHN MUTORWA, MP AND MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY (MAWF) ON THE LIFTING
OF RESTRICTIONS: FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE (FMD) OUTBREAK
IN THE NORTHERN COMMUNAL AREAS (NCA'S) OF NAMIBIA,
WINDHOEK, 22 JANUARY 2016, 09H30.**

- Honourable Deputy Minister,
- The Acting Permanent Secretary,
- The Deputy Permanent Secretaries,
- Members of the MAWF Management,
- Role players in the Livestock and Meat Industry,
- Members of the Media,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Welcome to the first MAWF Media Conference, in 2016!
2. It is my onerous public duty, to inform the public, on the lifting of the legally prescribed and enforced restrictions, following the successful containment of the two outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) that occurred and were detected, in some parts of the Northern Communal Areas (NCA), in May and July of 2015 respectively. The GRN, through the MAWF, is delighted to announce and pronounce, with appreciation, that due to tremendous support from the Government, livestock farmers, Farmers' Unions, Meat Board of Namibia, Meatco, Traditional Authorities and other stakeholders, significant progress was made and success achieved to resolve the FMD outbreak in the NCA's of Namibia.
3. The last confirmed case of FMD in the NCA's was recorded on the 22 July 2015, in a specific area, within the Omusati Region. According to the FMD national contingency plan and in line with the International Organization for Animal Health's (OIE) guidelines, the outbreaks are declared over, after six months from the last confirmed case in a vaccinated population!
4. The response to these outbreaks mainly involved: zoning movement control; decontamination; mass vaccination; disease surveillance; and awareness creation. This further involved the mobilisation of financial resources amounting to approximately N\$180 million. The

largest portion was spent on procuring 3,7 million doses of FMD vaccine. The vaccine procured was used for three rounds of vaccination, covering an estimated 1,1 million cattle, including those from and in Angola, from Namibia.

5. The Directorate of Veterinary Services (DVS), within the MAWF, had to recruit approximately 826 casual workers, to augment or strengthen veterinary staff, for the various FMD outbreak control activities.
6. Given the magnitude of this outbreak, both in terms of: financial and human resources, the number of animals involved, uncontrolled cross border movement of animals and the vast geographical size of the area involved, one would appreciate and understand that: the focus should henceforth be on preventative measures, to ensure that such an outbreak doesn't repeat itself. As such, the Ministry hereby requests the full cooperation of the Namibian public, to continue complying with disease prevention measures, that are implemented by Veterinary Services throughout Namibia. Farmers in the NCA's are particularly requested and strongly advised to:
 - (a) Present all the animals for FMD and CBPP (lung sickness) vaccinations and ear-tagging, when so announced and directed by the DVS.
 - (b) Utilise only official border posts to move animals across, particularly the Namibia/ Angola border, but also anywhere else, where the legal requirements, so demand.

- (c) Report the presence of cattle, not bearing official ear-tags, to the nearest State Veterinary Offices.
 - (d) Identify by means of official ear-tags, animals to be moved and only to be moved on and with authorized veterinary movement permits.
 - (e) Report all sick animals to the nearest veterinary office, in your area, immediately, at all times.
 - (f) Report all cases of illegal animal movements to the nearest Veterinary Office or Police, without fail.
7. All indications are that, the outbreak of FMD in the previously infected areas, has been successfully contained; hence, the decision to lift the restrictions in the Regions that were affected, with immediate effect! The measures that the MAWF, on the scientific/medical advice of the DVS, has reviewed or lifted are as follows:
- 7.1 Uplifting of movement restrictions:
- (a) Movement of animals, animal products and other materials within the FMD protection zone (areas of the NCA's west of Shamangorwa veterinary fence, to Kunene north) is allowed, accompanied by a veterinary movement permit, issued by Veterinary Services.

- (b) Movement of animals, animal products and other materials, within the FMD infected zone (areas of NCA's east of Shamangorwa veterinary fence and Zambezi Region) is allowed, accompanied by a veterinary movement permit, issued by DVS.
- (c) Movement of animals, animal products and other materials from protection zone to infected zone, is allowed, accompanied by or with a veterinary movement permit, issued by DVS.
- (d) Movement of live animals and animal products from the FMD protection zone and from the FMD infected zone, to the rest of the country, is not allowed, except: matured, deboned beef from export approved abattoirs and processed trophies, processed hides and processed skins, as well as other processed animal products.
- (e) Movement of animals from the FMD protection and FMD infected zones to the FMD free zone; as well as from the FMD infected zone to the FMD protection zone, is NOT allowed.
- (f) Movement of thatch grass, within the protection zone and from north to south of Veterinary Cordon Fence (VCF) is allowed.
- (g) Movements of fodder, hay, sorghum or maize stalks from north to south of Veterinary Cordon Fence (VCF) is allowed from approved GRN Green Scheme Farms, after quarantine.

- (h) Movement of hides, skins and game trophies to other parts of Namibia is allowed, after quarantine.
- (i) Movement of livestock, livestock products and other potentially infectious materials e.g. thatch grass, biological samples, fodder etc., from any country, to Namibia, is allowed, on condition that: it is accompanied by a veterinary import permit, issued by DVS and administered by official Veterinary Services of that particular Country, of origin.

7.2. **ROADBLOCKS**

- (a) Roadblocks that were setup, at various strategic points, to enforce the movement restrictions of animals, animal products and other potentially infectious materials, in the NCA's will now cease or stop.
- (b) Decontamination of vehicle tyres and searching of vehicles, for prohibited potentially infectious materials, at the Veterinary Check Points, will, however, remain in force.

7.3 **VACCINATION AGAINST FMD**

- (a) As per the directives of the DVS, Vaccination against FMD in the entire Ohangwena Region, part of Oshikoto Region and in an identified THIRTY (30) km strip, south of the Namibian-Angolan border, in the Kunene Region, Omusati Region and Kavango West Region, will continue.

- (b) All cattle owners, in the mentioned areas, are hereby, strongly urged and advised, to present their cattle for vaccination, whenever and wherever they are requested to do so, by the Veterinary Authorities of Namibia.

7.4 SURVEILLANCE AND REPORTING

- (a) DVS surveillance teams, will continue to remain on the ground, to inspect livestock and also to ensure that suspicious cases, are thoroughly and immediately investigated. Livestock owners are thus requested and urged to: keep on reporting any suspicious cases of animal diseases, to the nearest Veterinary Office(s), for immediate investigation and appropriate action.

7.5 RESUMPTION OF SLAUGHTER OF CATTLE AT EXPORT APPROVED ABATTOIRS IN THE NCA'S.

- (a) The movement of animals to export approved abattoirs; and the actual slaughter of such animals, at such export approved abattoirs, in the NCA's of Namibia, is hereby authorized.
- (b) Currently, the mentioned abattoirs are: Oshakati and Katima Mulilo Abattoirs, in the Oshana – and Zambezi Regions.
- (c) In terms of an existing legally signed Agreement, the two mentioned abattoirs are managed and operated by the Meat Corporation of Namibia (MeatCo). The existing Agreement will

expire on 4 March 2016. The Agreement, “may be extended by the Ministry, upon request by MeatCo, not less than 6 (six) months’ notice, prior to the expiry of the initial period, to renew the contract for a further period of 5 (five) years.” MeatCo’s official or formal request, for possible extension, has been awaited and is still being awaited by the MAWF!

7.6 CONSTRUCTION OF THE ANGOLA/NAMIBIA BORDER FENCE

In terms of the provisions of the relevant Cabinet DECISION, on the matter: bilateral consultations, at the appropriate diplomatic-political levels, between Angola and Namibia, are ongoing and in progress, on this very important matter.

8. FINAL CONCLUDING REMARKS

- (a) Finally, the MAWF would like, once again, to sincerely thank the following institutions and persons, for their most valuable advice, cooperation and support:
- (i) The President of the Republic of Namibia, H.E. Dr Hage G. Geingob;
 - (ii) The Government (Cabinet) of the Republic of Namibia;
 - (iii) The Government of the Republic of Angola;
 - (iv) Honourable Minister of Safety and Security of Namibia;
 - (v) Inspector General: NAMPOL and the entire Namibian Police Force; particularly those who are based in the affected Regions;

- (vi) DVS Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) and Staff, workers and Animal Technicians, employed in the DVS;
 - (vii) Farmers' Organizations, notably: NNFU and NAU, including your various affiliate organizations, individual farmers in the NCA's;
 - (viii) Casual Labourers;
 - (ix) Traditional Authorities in the NCA's;
 - (x) Regional Governors, Regional Councillors in the NCA's;
 - (xi) MeatBoard of Namibia;
 - (xii) MeatCo of Namibia;
 - (xiii) International Organizations, notably the FAO, EU etc.
 - (xiv) Namibian citizens, residents and visitors to our Country – the Land of the Brave.
- (b) In a united patriotic spirit, we have, so to say, won "the 2015 FMD battle." Let us nevertheless, remain in a state of readiness and alertness, for any potential future outbreaks. The "war" against the eventual eradication of Trans Boundary Animal Diseases, including FMD, from any part of Namibia's NCA's continues; until final victory. Our Colleagues in DVS are our soldiers. But, we must support them, at all times
- (c) Our Country's Constitution, guarantees the free movement of people. Regrettably, Our livestock's movements in the NCA's, are still curtailed and restricted by some Animal Diseases, notably FMD.

- (d) Our ultimate objective is: to eventually ensure free movement of our livestock, throughout Namibia, by eradicating FMD and other Animal Diseases. As such, we shall continue to welcome advice and support from each and all to eventually achieve the stated national objectives.

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Hon. John Mutorwa, MP

MINISTER: MAWF

FRIDAY, 22 JANUARY 2016, 09H30, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA.