



## Foot and mouth Disease February 2026

Highly contagious viral disease  
of cloven-hoofed animals.

**FMD is not a risk to human  
health or to food safety.**

FMD results in huge challenges  
to livestock production and  
severe socio-economic  
consequences and stringent  
control measures in the event of  
an outbreak.

**FMD threatens food security,  
global trade, and livestock  
health and welfare.**

Any country with a livestock  
sector is at an immediate risk of  
FMD due to the fast and global  
interconnections of today's  
world.

**Imports of livestock and  
livestock products represent a  
significant risk for the  
introducing FMD into Ireland.**

FMD is a notifiable disease,  
therefore, any suspicion of  
disease must be reported to the  
local [Regional Veterinary Office](#)  
(RVO) without delay.

Outside office hours, please  
contact the [National Disease  
Emergency Hotline on 01 492  
8026.](#)

## Foot and mouth Disease (FMD)

### Advice for livestock hauliers

#### What is Foot and mouth Disease?

- Foot and mouth disease (FMD) caused by the foot and mouth disease virus (FMDV), is one of the most **highly contagious diseases of livestock**.
- FMDV affects several animal species including cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, deer and other cloven-hoofed animals (animals with a divided hoof).
- **Foot and mouth disease virus (FMDV) is shed in very high amounts in all animal secretions (blister fluid, saliva, milk, expired air, urine, faeces,), and hence is highly transmissible via:**
  - **Direct contact:** Between an infected and a susceptible animal.
  - **Indirect contact:** Spread via contaminated vehicles, equipment, clothing, footwear, feed.
  - **Airborne spread:** Infected animals, particularly pigs, can exhale significant amount of virus in their breath; animals on other farms downwind may become infected by this route.
- **FMD could be introduced to Ireland through a number of routes:**
  - Illegal imports of contaminated food (meat, dairy) products.
  - ➔ **Food waste infected with the FMD virus being consumed by FMD susceptible animals represents the most significant risk pathway for a disease incursion into Ireland.**
  - Import of infected animals.
  - Contaminated vehicles, equipment, clothing, footwear.
  - Airborne: FMDV can be spread up to 60 km overland and 300 km over water.

#### If you transport livestock:

**\*Please be aware that you can inadvertently carry FMD virus\***

**Biosecurity measures MUST be taken by livestock transporters  
and people travelling to or through Europe  
Strict Biosecurity is the KEY preventative measure to protect  
Irish Livestock**

#### **AVOID CONTACT**

If you have been in contact with livestock in FMD affected countries **avoid direct contact with livestock for 14 days** upon your return to Ireland.

**USE A SECURE BIN** to dispose of food waste – avoid dropping meat or dairy products.

**NEVER** bring meat or dairy products containing into Ireland from FMD affected regions.

**NEVER feed food waste (swill) to livestock.**

**COMPLY** with border disinfection protocols if in place for your vehicle in addition to your own routine cleaning and disinfection procedures.



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### MAINTAIN AWARENESS OF THE CLINICAL SIGNS OF FMD

Blisters in the mouth, between toes and at heels: These can be difficult to spot and may rupture, or the horn may completely detach

Associated excessive salivation, lip smacking and lameness

High temperature (fever)  
Loss of appetite

Reduced productivity

Abortions and deaths in young animals



Photos courtesy [Lesion Library | Knowledge Bank | EuFMD vLearning](#)

## Global Foot and mouth Disease (FMD) situation

- The disease is estimated to circulate in 77% of the global livestock population, in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, as well as in a limited area of South America.
- FMD is endemic in several parts of Asia and in most of Africa and the Middle East. In Latin America, the majority of countries apply zoning and are recognised as FMD-free, either with or without vaccination.
- Australia, New Zealand, Central and North America, are currently free of FMD. However, FMD is a transboundary animal disease that can occur sporadically in any typically free area.
- The official FMD status of WOAHA Members can be found [here](#) . It should be noted that many countries in Africa and Asia, where FMD is widespread, do not have an official FMD status.

## FMD Awareness and prevention

- Strict rules are in place to prevent the entry of FMD into Ireland and in other European countries. Stringent measures are activated in the event of an outbreak. Control measures are underpinned by European legislation.
- Susceptible species of live animals and animal products entering Ireland from third countries (outside Europe) must comply with stringent import control requirements and undergo inspection in a designated Border Control Post supervised by DAFM. Livestock and animal products from European countries must meet certification requirements for intra-EU trade.
- It is illegal to bring meat and dairy products into the EU as personal consignments (in personal luggage or through postal services). [Further information on personal consignments](#)
- It is illegal to feed food waste to livestock that contains meat or has been in contact with meat.
- There is currently no treatment for FMD. Vaccination against FMD is undertaken only some countries where FMDV is endemic. No routine vaccination against FMD is currently taking place in Europe.

### Further information:

Use a government registered disinfectant for use against certain exotic diseases [gov - Disinfectants \(www.gov.ie\)](#)

Further information on FMD virus, control measures and advice for travelers entering Ireland:

[gov.ie - Foot and Mouth Disease](#)

### Further FMD information resources:

- [Lesion Library | Knowledge Bank | EuFMD vLearning](#) : For images of FMD.
- [Foot and mouth disease -WOAH - World Organisation for Animal Health](#)
- [Foot-and-mouth disease -European Commission](#)
- [The European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease \(EuFMD\) | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#)
- FMD Factsheets:
  - [FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE](#): (WOAH)
  - [FMD FMD English French leaflet LOWresolution](#): (EuFMD)