



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Foot-and-Mouth Disease Update

10th January 2025

National Disease Control Centre

Number 1 of 2025

Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak in Germany

- An outbreak of FMD has today (10th Jan) been reported in Germany.
- The case involves water buffalo on a holding in the state of Brandenburg.
- The German authorities have put in place controls to prevent onward spread and are investigating the circumstances of the outbreak.
- A 3k protection zone and 10k surveillance zone have been put in place around the infected premises, within which strict controls and testing protocols are being put in place. A movement ban on FMD-susceptible species has been temporarily put in place in the state of Brandenburg.

FMD Preparedness in Ireland

- The Department has confirmed that no animals susceptible to FMD (i.e. cattle, sheep, pigs, etc) have been imported into Ireland from Germany since 1st November 2024, which is long before the case in Germany would have been first infected.
- Ireland's controls to prevent FMD include strict prohibitions on the imports of animals and animal products from countries or zones in which FMD is present; a comprehensive veterinary surveillance system to detect unusual disease outbreaks; and active follow up and veterinary investigation of any suspects reports.
- If a FMD case were to be identified in Ireland, the infected herd would be culled, the site disinfected, and a 3k protection zone and 10k surveillance zone set up, within which very strict movement controls and testing would be imposed. A national movement ban is very likely to be imposed in the first days after any initial FMD case.
- If a case of FMD were to occur in Ireland, it would lead to the immediate loss of market access for Irish animals and animal products.
- The Department regularly carries out simulation exercises, workshops and training sessions to ensure a rapid and effective response to any suspected cases of FMD in Ireland and works with other countries and international organisations to enhance our emergency preparedness.

Foot and mouth disease: global situation

- FMD continues to be reported in many regions around the world. It is endemic in many developing countries, causing food security issues and preventing farmers in these countries from accessing international markets.
- Foot and Mouth Disease 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
- The periodic appearance of FMD in previously-free countries and of new serotypes in affected countries demonstrates the highly transmissible nature of the virus and the risk posed to FMD free areas, as clearly demonstrated by the new case in Germany.
- Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Central and North America, and continental Western Europe except Germany are currently free of FMD
- **FMD is one of the most contagious diseases of animals**. The virus can be introduced into new areas through the movement of infected animals, feeding of contaminated products of animal origin to susceptible species of animals, contaminated materials coming into contact with animals and airborne transmission over long distances
- Anyone arriving into Ireland following contact with susceptible species of animals in FMD affected areas must take biosecurity precautions. See pages “advice for travellers” below for further details.

Risk to Ireland

- **FMD continues to be reported in new areas around the world**
- **Humans** play an important role in **spreading FMD** to new regions
- **Travellers coming back from FMD affected regions** must be **vigilant** to avoid inadvertently bringing back to Ireland FMD contaminated meat or meat, dairy, clothing, footwear, vehicles, equipment, etc.
- Meat and dairy may not be brought into the EU as personal consignments, e.g., in airplane baggage or through the postal service
- **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
- Other risk factors **include clothing, footwear, vehicles and equipment contaminated** with the FMD virus

Advice for Travellers

- The **FMD virus can be brought into free areas through introduction of contaminated meat, dairy and materials such as clothing, shoes, equipment, etc**
- **It is illegal to bring meat or dairy into Ireland** from outside the EU. Strict rules are in place for the importation of such products, e.g., must come from approved countries/ regions, must be accompanied by a veterinary health certificate and undergo checks by officials from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in a Border Control Post
- **Do not bring meat or dairy products onto Irish farms**
- Always use a **secure bin to dispose of waste food**, so that it cannot be accessed by farm animals, wild animals, or wild birds

If you have been in a country where FMD is present, it is important that the guidelines outlined below are followed:

Prior to arrival in Ireland:

- Avoid visiting livestock farms or other places where livestock or wildlife are kept
- **If you have been on a farm or animal holding in an area affected by FMD**, shower or bathe prior to returning to Ireland paying particular attention to fingernails and hair

- Any clothing used while visiting livestock farms, wildlife areas or zoos should be washed with detergent at 60°C minimum or professionally dry-cleaned
- Clean any jewellery, watches, phones, iPads etc. with a disinfectant wipe if they were brought onto farms in an area affected by FMD.
- **Thoroughly clean all footwear** before arriving in Ireland, especially if they have been worn on a farm or area with susceptible livestock.
- Remember: it is **illegal to bring back meat or dairy products into the EU.**

Upon arrival in Ireland:

- If arriving into Dublin or Shannon Airport, you should visit the DAFM office prior to leaving baggage reclaim. If the office is closed, or you are entering Ireland through a different location, you should contact your nearest Regional Veterinary Office during normal office hours for advice
- If you have been on livestock farms, wildlife areas or zoos in FMD affected countries, avoid all contact with livestock or wildlife for at least 14 days following arrival in Ireland – no exceptions!
- Ensure that clothes brought with you on your trip have been thoroughly washed with detergent at 60°C minimum or professionally dry cleaned before wearing them in Ireland. Footwear should be cleaned and disinfected using a product proven to be effective against FMD virus as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- It is recommended that DAFM is pre-notified of the intended arrival into Ireland of travellers who have been in contact with livestock or susceptible wildlife in FMD affected areas. Details on how to pre-notify DAFM can be found below. If entering through:
 - Dublin Airport: Contact the DAFM duty officer by calling + 353 (0) 87 417 8986. If you need to contact a DAFM officer on arrival in Dublin Airport, you may do so by pressing the button marked Duty Supervisor on the courtesy telephone outside the Department of Agriculture offices in the baggage reclaim hall, opposite:
 - Carousel No. 6 in Terminal 1, or
 - Carousel No. 2 in Terminal 2.
 - Shannon Airport: Contact the Portal Inspector on duty by calling on +353 61 500 940 or by emailing PetsShannon@agriculture.gov.ie
 - Other entry points to Ireland: Contact the local Regional Veterinary Office. Contact details can be found here: [Contact the Department](#)
- **A leaflet with information for travellers may be found [here](#).**

Advice for Livestock Owners



NEVER FEED FOOD WASTE TO LIVESTOCK

- It is **illegal to feed food waste** which contains meat or may have been in contact with meat to livestock
- **Food waste (swill) including kitchen waste and catering waste must be disposed of carefully** away from livestock. Bins must be located in a secure location and sealed to ensure that vermin, birds or other animals do not carry food waste into areas where livestock are kept
- Livestock owners in Ireland are advised to implement **biosecurity measures** to mitigate the risk of an outbreak of the disease in this country such as establishing disinfectant points. **Anyone coming from an FMD affected region** should avoid entering a farm for **14 days following arrival in Ireland** to prevent the risk of contaminated clothing, footwear, vehicles or equipment coming into contact with livestock
- Any suspicions of FMD must be reported to the local [Regional Veterinary Office](#) during normal office hours or the National Disease Emergency Hotline at 01 4928026 (outside of normal office hours) without delay

Information on FMD

- FMD virus affects many species of animals including **cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, deer and other cloven-hoofed animals** (that is, animals with a divided hoof).
- FMD virus **does not pose a risk to human health or food safety**
- FMD virus is found in **all excretions and secretions from infected animals**. Infected animals shed the virus in blister fluid, saliva, milk, expired air, urine and faeces. Animals can shed the virus before clinical signs appear.
- The disease is transmitted to other animals by three main routes:
 1. **Direct contact** between an infected animal and a susceptible animal, for example: animals touching nose to nose across a fence

2. Indirect contact between animals, for example: a **contaminated person or vehicle** moving between farms, the **sharing of equipment between farms**, or the feeding of **contaminated animal products to animals**
 3. **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 virus causes **fluid-filled blisters to develop on the tongue, dental pad, nose and feet of affected animals.** These can be very painful, and affected animals become lame, go off their food and salivate excessively. Animals develop a fever just before the blisters appear. Eventually the fluid-filled blisters burst leaving an open sore
 - The disease is severe in pigs and cattle but can be difficult to spot in sheep
 - Infected animals have a reduced milk yield, while young animals, particularly piglets and lambs, may die without showing obvious signs. Pregnant sheep may abort.
 - Most adult animals will recover from FMD after 10-14 days, however, dairy cattle may never return to their previous milk yield.

FMD in cattle:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Excessive salivation and lip smacking
- Lameness
- Reduced milk yield
- Blisters in the mouth, between toes and at heels



Figs. 2 and 3. FMD lesions in cattle. (L) Ruptured blister on the tongue. (R) Lesion on the coronary band (Source: [EuFMD Lesion Library](#)).

FMD in sheep:

- Fever
- Lameness
- Abortions and deaths in young lambs
- Blisters in the mouth and on the feet; these can be difficult to spot



Figs. 4 and 5. Lesions in sheep. (L) Lesions on the digital pad. (R) Lesion on the foot (Source: [EuFMD Lesion Library](#)).

FMD in pigs:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Severe lameness
- Pigs may huddle together
- Blisters on the snout, in the mouth and on the feet, especially where the horn joins the skin; these may rupture and the horn may completely detach



Figs. 5 and 6. FMD lesions in pigs. (L) Detachment of the claw from the coronary band (“thimbling”). (R) Blisters on the snout (Source: [EuFMD Lesion Library](#)).

- More images of FMD in cattle, pigs, sheep and goats from the EuFMD Lesion Library can be found [here](#)
- 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.

Further information on FMD

Please consult the following resources for further information on FMD virus:

- [Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#)
- [European Commission: Foot-and-mouth disease](#)
- [FAO: The European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease \(EuFMD\)](#)
- [WOAH Technical Disease Card: Foot and mouth disease](#)
- [Center for Food Security and Public Health at Iowa State University, College of Veterinary Medicine FMD Technical Factsheet](#)

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