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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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College of Veterinary Medicine

VETERINARY CONTINUING EDUCATION



ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA  
UNITED STATES OF MINNESOTA

## Foot and Mouth Information

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### Prevention Guidelines for Farmers

**The State Board of Animal Health suggests these 10 steps for farmers to minimize the risk of foot-and-mouth disease striking their livestock.**

- Don't let people who have been in a country with foot-and-mouth disease visit your farm until they've been in the United States for at least one week.
- Make sure their clothes have been laundered and their shoes have been cleaned before they visit your farm.
- Any farm items from Europe, including horse-related items such as saddles, should be disinfected before being brought onto your farm.
- If someone plans to travel to a country with a foot-and-mouth outbreak, tell them not to visit farms or other places where infected animals might be found (zoos, pastures, etc.).
- Don't allow meat products from Europe onto your farm.
- Don't import animals or animal semen from Europe.
- Review your bio-security program with your veterinarian and insist that visitors wear clean clothing and boots if they're going to come in contact with your animals or their feed.
- For now, discourage tours of your farm and unnecessary traffic to and from it.
- Take steps to reduce cross traffic between delivery trucks and farm vehicles if possible.
- Familiarize yourself with foot-and-mouth symptoms, which include blisters on the hoof, tongue, lips or mouth; stringy saliva dripping from the mouth, and lameness. If you have any suspicion the disease is on your farm, stop movements on and off the farm and contact your veterinarian immediately. Then call the **Minnesota Board of Animal Health at 651-296-2942.**

## **Prevention and Control**

Foot-and-mouth (FMD) is one of the most difficult animal infections to control. Because the disease occurs in many parts of the world, there is always a chance of its accidental introduction into the United States.

Animals and animal byproducts from areas known to be infected are prohibited entry into this country. A single infected animal or one contaminated sausage could carry the virus to American livestock.

Animals in this country are highly susceptible to FMD. They have not developed immunity to it because FMD has not occurred here since 1929 and because U.S. veterinarians do not vaccinate against it. If an outbreak were to occur in the United States, this disease could spread rapidly to all sections of the country by routine livestock movements unless detected early and eradicated immediately.

If FMD were to spread unchecked, the economic impact could reach billions of dollars in the first year. The Nation's deer and other wildlife populations could also rapidly become infected and remain a reservoir of infection.

## **What You Can Do**

You can back up the Nation's efforts against FMD by:

Watching for slobbering, lameness, and other signs of FMD in your herd.

Immediately reporting any unusual or suspicious signs of disease to your veterinarian, to State or Federal animal disease-control officials, or to your county agricultural agent.

If foot-and-mouth disease should appear in your animals, your report will set in motion an effective State and Federal eradication program.

Your participation is vital. Both the early recognition of disease signs and the prompt notification of officials are essential if eradication is to be carried out successfully. Your warning may prevent FMD from becoming established in the United States, or – if it does spread – reduce the time and money needed to wipe it out.

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