

## Issues Briefing Note

November 2024

### Foot & Mouth Disease

#### International Travellers Awareness

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) is a virus that is highly contagious to cloven-hoofed animals including cattle, pigs and sheep. **Canada is free of FMD**. This virus is the greatest health threat to Canadian livestock and an incursion would be economically and socially devastating.

Many countries in Asia, Africa and South America are positive for FMD. Travellers returning from these areas pose a risk to Canada's livestock.

#### **Travellers can play a role in keeping Canada's livestock and wildlife safe.**

- Always declare to Canadian Border Services Agents when you have travelled from a farm internationally OR will be returning to a farm in Canada.
- Everyone must avoid contact with livestock or susceptible animals for **5 days** after returning to Canada.
- When returning from a country **without** an official FMD-Negative status, avoid contact with livestock or agricultural operations for at least **14 days**.
  - Check the World Organisation for Animal Health website for the [Official Disease Status of countries](#).
- Declare all food products you bring into Canada.
  - Never bring back meat or animal products from international travel.
  - Any leftover food served on your flight, or bought at an overseas airport, must be left on the plane.
- Clean and disinfect your belongings.
  - Leave behind any footwear or belongings that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
  - Clean all soil and organic material from items prior to disinfecting.
  - Dry clean or wash all clothing.
  - Remember to clean and disinfect any equipment that has had contact with soil. This could include camping or hiking gear, tools or equipment.

#### **How to disinfect belongings:**

- First, wash items or remove all visible dirt and organic matter.
- Then soak items for **30 minutes** in one of the following:
  - 50% water / 50% vinegar
  - 100g sodium carbonate (washing soda) per 1 litre of water
  - 2g citric acid powder per 1 litre of water
- Clothing can be dry-cleaned.

*FMD is found in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and South America. It has not occurred in Canada since 1952. FMD is one of the most contagious viruses of livestock. The virus could be carried to Canada in contaminated meat, animal products, or on contaminated objects. FMD is NOT a threat to humans. It is not related to human hand, foot and mouth disease despite the similar name. You do not need to fear FMD for your personal health. However, your actions can help protect Canada's livestock and wildlife populations.*