



KINGDOM OF ESWATINI

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

DATE: 3 July 2026

UPDATE ON WEEK 49 OF FMD OUTBREAK RESPONSE

1. INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the FMD control activities for the week 49 (18th May 2026 to 22nd May 2026) of the FMD outbreak response. The activities include FMD vaccination, awareness activities and sanitary controls in the country.

2. WEEK 49 HIGHLIGHTS/ REPORTS

The anticipated delivery of 185,000 doses of the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine, scheduled for 22nd May 2026, did not materialize. Consequently, all regional vaccination teams were compelled to cancel vaccination activities that had already been planned for week 50. In week 49, vaccination was limited to Project Canaan where 95 cattle were vaccinated.

Dip tank inspections continued across all regions during Week 49. No clinical signs suggestive of FMD were observed in the inspected dip tanks nationwide, except at Mabuti Dip Tank in Mliba subregion where one animal was found with a wound on the tongue and Lubisana dip tank in Mliba subregion where 3 clinically positive cattle also tested positive on NSP for FMD.

Inspection of the cordon fence revealed significant breaches around the Ndlotane area in Shiselweni. This section poses a considerable risk for uncontrolled livestock movement between Eswatini and the Republic of South Africa (RSA). Furthermore, close contact between cattle from Eswatini and RSA was observed at Eteteni, Mponono, and Somtsewu areas in Mankayane due to the absence of an effective cordon line in these areas. Such interactions increase the risk of transboundary disease (TADs) transmission. All regions were therefore urged to procure fencing materials and commence rehabilitation and fencing of the identified high-risk areas as a matter of urgency.

As part of ongoing surveillance activities, blood samples were collected from game animals throughout the country. Laboratory testing indicated that all wildlife samples were negative for FMD Non-Structural Protein (NSP) antibodies, suggesting no evidence of FMD infection among the sampled game animals.

In addition, samples for Post Vaccination Monitoring (PVM) were collected from Mgubhane, Magudu, Mpolonja, and Mtilane Dip Tanks in Manzini sub region. These samples have been submitted to the laboratory and are currently awaiting analysis and reporting of results.

3. OTHER DISEASES

During the dip tank inspection, diseases of cattle other than FMD were noted. These included;

- Abortions in cattle that were vaccinated for FMD in Zombodze, in the Shiselweni region. These abortions are to be investigated to allay fears that they were a side effect of the FMD vaccine.
- Cattle samples brought to the laboratory were also tested for Blue Tongue. Most of the tested samples were positive. A further investigation is to be done to ascertain if the country really has Blue Tongue Disease.
- Dermatophilosis cases were reported at Mfenyane dip tank in the Shiselweni region.
- Bovine tuberculosis cases at Thobini dip tank in Piggs Peak were suspected as some cattle had enlarged lymph nodes on inspection. These suspect animals will be closely monitored.

4. AWARENES AND SENSITIZATION

- FMD awareness and sensitization continues in some dip tanks in the country. There was also an awareness and sensitization meeting for AHIs where they were reminded of their supervisory duties and the importance of supervision in the FMD control. The SOP for breeding animals was also discussed briefly during this awareness.
- An enquiry will be made to NDRMA about utilization of the Manyonyaneni budget to host 1 day training of AHIs and some veterinary staff on all the SOPs.

5. WAY FORWARD

a. Vaccination – Teams were urged to plan for vaccination which should start on the 1st June 2026 if the anticipated FMD vaccine arrives on the 27th May 2026. Proposed vaccination dates were to be submitted by team leaders on Monday the 25th May 2026.

c. Finalization of the SOPs – these will be done by Wednesday the 27th May 2026 efore the raining of trainers.

c. Training of Trainers of the veterinary team on the SOPs (breeding, feedlotting and direct slaughter) will be conducted on the 27th May 2026.

