



Foot-and-Mouth Disease – Update. July 15, 2024

On March 26 2024, Animal Health Canada hosted a hybrid meeting in Ottawa to kick-off the planning and preparedness discussion for Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) with a broad group of stakeholders. A report from that meeting was drafted for comment by attendees. It has now been finalised and posted in [English](#) and [French](#).

During the meeting, the African Swine Fever Executive Management Board (ASF-EMB) was showcased as a model for planning and preparedness for FMD and more broadly for Foreign Animal Diseases (FAD), including emerging diseases. Discussions in the meeting confirmed the ASF-EMB model is a robust template to build from, with some notable differences in diseases and stakeholders. Most importantly, was the caution against repeating any of the foundational work already achieved for African Swine Fever.

Planning and preparedness for FMD have been ongoing for more than a year through the efforts of the FMD Vaccine Strategy Working Group (WG), led by Serecon Inc., with participation from Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), provincial members of the Council of Chief Veterinary Officers (CCVO), and representatives from the national livestock associations: Canadian Cattle Association, Canadian Pork Council, Canadian Sheep Federation and Dairy Farmers of Canada.

These groups have made significant progress on the development of the Vaccination Implementation Support Structure (VISS), which will form a complete chapter in the Integrated Emergency Response Plan (IERP) for Foot-and-Mouth Disease.

The VISS will contain protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) necessary for the implementation of CFIA's vaccination policy and strategies. It will be built to be leveraged as a foundation for use in other disease vaccination situations, if necessary. The livestock commodities have each been developing SOPs specific to their operational realities. This work recognizes the different operating realities across and within the swine, beef, dairy and sheep production systems.

Stakeholder training and a communication strategy is also built into the work plan of the VISS, this year. In November 2024, a tabletop exercise will trial the draft VISS. The document will be refined based on learnings and identification of gaps; then, it will be retested in early 2025.



With final publication as part of the IERP targeted for spring of 2025, the VISS will increase the extent of readiness for the use of emergency vaccines and increase understanding of the complexities and intricacies in each livestock sector.

Running concurrently to the VISS project, is the development of the Foot-and-Mouth Disease IERP. The IERP is leveraging the significant amount of work already completed as part of the ASF IERP. This work will focus on clarifying, developing and defining roles and responsibilities for Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments and Industry Partners (FPTI) in the event of a foreign animal disease outbreak.

The work will provide guidance on areas of potential collaboration for FPTI information flow among stakeholder organizations. The IERP will also be tested as part of the tabletop exercises noted above.

Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments and Industry Partners

Canadian Food Inspection Agency is also collecting and using baseline data provided by stakeholders from national commodities in the FMD Vaccine Strategy WG for disease modelling. With farm locations and animal movement information, models can predict foreign animal disease spread over time.

Modelling can help predict losses and economic impact. Perhaps most importantly, the model can help identify which activities provide the most significant impacts on disease management so that a more targeted approach to preparedness can be achieved.

In the coming months, as working groups are struck to focus on things like biosecurity, depopulation and disposal, FMD work will expand to require broader subject matter expertise and inclusion of commodities beyond the Animal Health Canada membership.