

Notification for Producers

As soon as possible – at the first signs of an outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in the U.S. – State Veterinarians or Commissioners of Agriculture, in cooperation with their Joint Information Center (JIC), should issue notifications like the following to dairy farms in the New England states. Insofar as possible, phone contacts should be documented and followed up with notifications by email, fax, or post.

This call is being made to alert you about an animal disease emergency in the United States. An animal with symptoms resembling Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) has been identified in _____ . Officials have classified the symptoms as “highly suspicious.” They have collected samples which are in the process of being analyzed. Preparations for emergency response are urgently required. In particular, we need your cooperation to reduce the risk of spreading an extremely contagious disease and damage to dairy operations.

The State Veterinarians and Commissioners of Agriculture in New England have exercised their statutory responsibility and authority to protect livestock by ordering a stop to movement of all animals that are susceptible to FMD. Shipment of cloven-hoofed animals (e.g., cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats) is forbidden within, to, or from the six states, at least until the extent of infection is determined. Exceptions will only be granted under extraordinary circumstances and for shipment to terminal sites. Producers and haulers are required to comply immediately with these controls on animal movement.

Furthermore, if links to FMD are found in New England itself, authorities will establish a Control Area in which movement of all products of susceptible animals – including raw milk – will also be subject to emergency controls. Shipments of unpasteurized milk within the Control Area will be forbidden unless high biosecurity standards are met and a Permit is issued by Incident Command.

These controls will remain in place until state and federal officials determine that the movement of susceptible animals or their products is safe. We will notify you officially when these controls are changed or revoked.

In the meantime, you are advised to prepare to meet the biosecurity standards that will be required if FMD threatens our region. In fact, to prevent the spread of disease, these standards are strongly recommended now, precisely to prevent infection and the need for yet more stringent controls.

If, despite precautions, FMD breaks in New England, a Permit to ship raw milk within, to or from a Control Area may be required and granted only if haulers meet the following requirements:

- Establish a perimeter that can limit access to all livestock as well as the facilities where they are milked, housed, or handled. Post biosecurity information.
- Immediately stop all nonessential traffic to and from the farm, ideally with a single gate and a cleaning station that controls access to the farm. In particular, do not visit other farms and stop all livestock shipments.
- Limit traffic on and off the farm to
 - Employees
 - Feed
 - Milk haulers

- Veterinarians, and
- State or federal inspectors.
- Whenever possible, people who leave the farm must shower and change into clean clothes and shoes as they leave.
- Insofar as possible, delivery of feed and supplies or milk pickup should be for one farm property per trip rather than multiple stops per load.
- Establish a wash station to properly clean and disinfect all vehicles both as they enter and as they leave the farm.
- Limit movement within the farm premises to minimize human contact with animals and their facilities as well as milk and manure.
- Remind any neighbors with cloven-hoofed animals that the State Veterinarian (or Commissioners of Agriculture) has ordered movement of those animals to stop.
- Prevent access to raw milk beyond the herd. Raw milk must not be disposed of by feeding it to other animals!
- Frequently check cattle for abnormal behavior or other signs of infection. Immediately report any animal that looks suspicious to the Office of the State Veterinarian or Commissioners of Agriculture.
- Insofar as possible, milk pickup will continue with a minimum disruption but only with permission of the State Veterinarian or the Commissioner of Agriculture.
 - If the farm does not have a vehicle wash station or is otherwise unprepared to maintain effective biosecurity, the hauler must not pick up milk from that farm.
 - Premises with susceptible livestock must undergo testing to prove that they are virus-free (FMDV negative status) before animals or products can move.
 - Movements will only be permitted within a specified timeframe (generally not to exceed 24 hours) after testing negative.
 - Surveillance for dairy farms will require submission of bulk tank samples each day for testing.

For further information you may call _____ or visit the website at _____.

If neighbors or the media ask what is going on, you are welcome to remind them that Foot-and-Mouth Disease is a health concern only for certain kinds of livestock – not for people. In particular:

- Consumers can continue to drink milk.
FMD does not significantly affect human health or food safety. It cannot be spread **to** humans, but it can be spread **by** humans.
Note: FMD is not related to “Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease” (HFMD) or “Mad Cow” Disease (BSE).
- Pasteurization of dairy products effectively eliminates Foot-and-Mouth Disease Virus; so foods made with pasteurized milk or cheese remain safe.
Note: Consumers want more than assertions of safety. Knowledge that pasteurization effectively eliminates the FMD virus helps convince them that milk is safe to drink.
- Foot-and-Mouth Disease has never been transmitted from pasteurized dairy products to humans.
There is not a single case on record.

- Foot-and-Mouth Disease has been reported to affect human health only in very few, rare cases.

Human health effects are so rare that no major scientific or public health organization considers it a significant risk. Even in those very rare cases, the person who was supposedly affected had worked closely with FMD-infected livestock and recovered quickly.

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