agriculture

Department:
Agriculture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEMORANDUM

DATE:	25 May 2009	
TO:	All Provincial Directors: Veterinary Services, CD: FAHDM, HLS, DD's, DoA State Vets + at Ports of Entry, HLS, AVCASA , Feedlot Association of SA, NAFU, NERPO, NWGA, OBP, OVI, PVS, RPO, SAAHA, SAGRO, SAHC, SAMIC, , SAMM/SAVM, SAMPA, SAOBC, SAPA, SAPPO, SAVA, SAVC, Prof G Bath (UP), PA Prof Bath (UP), WLRSA (Manager), Horses Import/Export Working Group and Poultry Group of SAVA	
FROM:	Director: Animal Health	
ENQUIRIES	Dr Obed Letuka	
TEL:	+27 12 319 7489 ROOM NO:	G. 19 Delpen
FAX:	+27 12 329 0499	

EXPLANATION FOR THE ANIMAL DISEASES REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS – NOTICE R. 558 PUBLISHED IN GOVERNMENT GAZETTE NO. 32234 OF 22 MAY 2009

Dear Colleagues and Stakeholders,

Following the consultations held by Directorate of Veterinary Services with different livestock industry organizations' representatives as well as trade partners, it has been found necessary to make the amendments to the Animal Diseases Regulations as legislated in Notice No. R 558 published in Government Gazette No. 32234 of 22 May 2009. This document gives brief explanation for the amendments in alphabetical order of the animal diseases.

African horse sickness:
It became necessary to give a more detailed description of the African Horse sickness controlled area as included in Table 1. An improved vaccination schedule has been included in Table 2. The regulations have been amended to include more accurate information on the distribution of zebra in the African Horse sickness controlled area, which will facilitate surveillance in an outbreak situation (Regulation 20B). In addition the Afrikaans terminology for African Horse sickness was corrected to "Afrika Perdesiekte".

African Swine Fever:
The amendment of Regulation 20 of the Regulations has included the Provinces of Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal among the provinces with declared restrictions on the movement of warthog, bush pig or wild pig carcass, meat, skin, trophy or any other product of warthog, bush pig or wild pig as well as the mistake in the Afrikaans text for African swine fever as "Afrikaanse Varkpes" instead of "Afrika Varkpes".

Bovine Malignant Catarrhal Fever:
The policy on Wildebeest Associated Bovine Malignant Catarrhal Fever (Snotsiekte) was developed after incorporation of inputs from the industry and ratified by DEXCO in 2003. In terms of the above policy, the DoA undertook to declare Bovine Malignant Catarrhal Fever (Snotsiekte) as a notifiable animal disease. A consensus was reached that it is not desirable to declare Bovine Malignant Catarrhal Fever (Snotsiekte) as a controlled animal disease because there is no scientifically proven control measures that can be applied. The amendment of the regulations has declared Bovine Malignant Catarrhal Fever (Snotsiekte) as a notifiable disease and thus facilitates accurate data collection about the occurrence of the disease in South Africa.

Corridor or Buffalo disease:
The amendment has aligned the Corridor or Buffalo disease controlled areas with the Foot and Mouth disease infected zone in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces, as well as to correct the outline of the Corridor or Buffalo disease controlled area in the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

Equine Influenza:
According to the policy following the categorization of animal diseases, Equine Influenza is a disease of concern in South Africa due to its rapid spread and the threat to the horse industry. The discussions between the DoA and the trading partners resulted in the requirement of regular vaccination of competition horses against Equine Influenza and proof thereof to be entered into the individual passport of each horse. The DoA subsequently had discussions with the horse industry where a recommendation was made that Equine Influenza should be declared as a controlled animal disease by the amendment in Table 2.

Foot and mouth disease:
Since Foot and mouth disease is a trade sensitive animal disease, it was found very important that the definition of FMD controlled areas for South Africa be in line with the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code. The FMD controlled areas had to be subdivided according to OIE terminology and defined in Table 1 of the Regulations with due reference to Table 2. , the FMD controlled areas, as described in the amended Table 1 of the Regulations, have been subdivided into an infected zone, a buffer zone, and an inspection area of the free zone. The rest of the country, including the inspection area of the free zone, is defined for trade purposes as an FMD free zone without vaccination. The exact description of each zone was confirmed by the respective provinces and translated into GIS maps.
The control measures relating to FMD, as outlined in Table 2, have been revised to capture all aspects such as vaccination, movement control (animals, animal products, infectious and contaminated things) and disease surveillance

Newcastle disease:

An eradication (slaughter out) policy for Newcastle disease was followed until 1971, when it was decided that it was no longer feasible to control the disease by eradication. Newcastle disease was considered as an endemic disease since 1971 and the first importation of vaccines was allowed in 1971. Since 1999 OVI demonstrated that Newcastle disease virus was not endemic but viruses were introduced into the country from time to time, hence outbreaks occurred very infrequently. The Animal Diseases Regulations were amended (Notice No. R 361 of 7 April 2000) to the effect that infected bird shall be isolated and destroyed by a responsible person. Newcastle disease outbreaks still occur in the country. The culling policy was found to be impractical and was abandoned.

It has thus been found necessary to define Newcastle disease to ensure clarity on situations when control measures have to be implemented. State veterinarians place the premises under quarantine, but the fowls are either sent to the abattoir under cover of a red-cross permit (in the case of broilers) or kept under quarantine, with the necessary quarantine measures employed to prevent the spread of the virus, until the fowls reach the end of their production cycle (layers and breeders). These measures are practical and ensure that the disease is reported to the veterinary authorities in order for the required quarantine measures to be employed, but do not result in the financial destruction of the farmer.

Control measures have been drafted in collaboration with the poultry industry and the provincial veterinary authorities. The Regulations now have to be amended to do away with the 'culling policy', whilst the agreed upon control measures have been provided for in the Regulations.

Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome:

The first outbreak of Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) was diagnosed in April 2004 in the Western Cape Province. In that instance, it was the American (a more virulent) strain of the disease. At that stage, the disease was successfully eradicated. The first suspicion of the re-emergence of disease was detected in August 2007 on a farm in Klapmuts during the routine serological monitoring of all pigs in the Western Cape Province. Further analysis on tissues revealed that the European (a less virulent) strain was responsible for the current outbreak. More samples tested positive for PRRS from (Tierfontein) Malmesbury, Klapmuts, Philippi, Caledon, and Worcester. It then became evident that the disease was widespread among farms in the Western Cape Province towards the end of September 2007. All affected farms put under quarantine while controlled slaughter and culling operations were instituted.

Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome is already an OIE listed disease. The OIE is also planning to introduce a chapter on PRRS into the Terrestrial Animal Health Code. Because of this and the PRRS outbreaks that occurred in the country, it was found necessary for South Africa to declare PRRS as a controlled disease by the amendment in Table 2.

***Salmonella* Gallinarum and *Salmonella* Pullorum:**

Salmonella Gallinarum and *Salmonella* Pullorum used to be very rare in South Africa and outbreaks only occurred in isolated instances. The incidence of especially fowl typhoid has however, increased during recent years and it has become imperative to institute stricter control measures. The main mechanism of the control of both diseases is the establishment of disease-free breeding flocks. Grand-parent and

pedigree poultry flocks may thus not be immunized, but should be free of both diseases. This will ensure that the poultry that originate from these flocks (parent and commercial flocks) are also free. The need for the definition of "grandparents" in the regulations has also been identified.
Any infected poultry flocks should be isolated and destroyed. This is essential, as infected birds remain carriers of the disease.
South Africa is the main supplier of layer hens to the neighbouring SADC countries. The Animal Diseases Regulations have been amended to ensure that adequate disease control measures are in place to ensure that only *Salmonella* Gallinarum and *Salmonella* Pullorum free layers are exported.

Strangles:
Strangles is highly contagious and transmission occurs via the oral and nasal routes, most commonly the oral route. Contaminated feed, water, bedding, stables and stable utensils, including tack or harnesses, are most important in the spread of the infection.
Bactrin and extract types of vaccines produce only low level of resistance to field exposure. Attenuated strain type of vaccines which offer better protection, are often associated with abscesses in lymph nodes and other parts of the body.
Due to the increasing incidence of Strangles in South Africa and the fact that the disease is difficult to control, the DoA in consultation with the horse industry made a recommendation that Strangles should be declared as a notifiable animal disease. The amendment of the Animal Diseases regulations has declared Strangles as a notifiable disease and should facilitate accurate data collection about the occurrence of the disease in South Africa.

Compensation:
Following deliberations on "compensation" subsequent to the recent outbreaks of animal diseases whereby animals were destroyed, it became apparent that Regulation 30 is not a practical guideline for determining compensation.
Regulation 30 currently indicates 80%, 100% and 50% of fair market value as applicable compensation for infected animals, animals killed for controlled veterinary acts and infectious things, respectively. In a disease outbreak, however, it is very important for the director to engender maximum support of the affected farmers for the control measures, by determining a mutually agreeable compensation value. This requires the director to liaise with affected parties as an ad hoc rapid response to determine the most appropriate and acceptable compensation value.
The amended Animal Diseases regulations on compensation empowers the director to determine the applicable compensation in consultation with relevant industry organizations and enable government to persist with the current policy of generous but realistic compensation for animals destroyed in disease control campaigns.

Restrictions of buffalo movement:
Prior to 1996, no live buffalo were allowed out of the Corridor or Buffalo disease controlled area and prior to 1998, no live buffalo were allowed to be transported out of the Foot and mouth disease controlled areas. This situation changed with the inception and development of "disease free" buffalo breeding projects, designed to produce "disease free" calves from diseased parent stock. The objective was to provide official conservation organizations and the wildlife ranching industry with clean buffalo that did not pose any disease risk. A disease risk management protocol

was developed and amended on several occasions in an effort to minimize the disease risk associated with these projects, but by December 2001, following several "break through" infections; it became apparent that these projects were relatively high risk activities.

Most role players in the Buffalo industry have been aware for some time of the Department of Agriculture's concern over the Animal Health risks related to buffalo breeding projects that make use of "infected" parent stock. This was communicated to the Industry at several open fora, including a meeting at Hoedspruit in December 2001, and an information day on buffalo and Theileriosis held at Irene in October 2006. Through such meetings, the industry was made aware of the Department's phasing out deadline of 31st December 2011 for all buffalo breeding projects that make use of "infected" parent stock, in order to end this high risk practice. Unfortunately, the levels of "break-through" infections involving calves from infected breeding stock remain unacceptably high, and a number of "clean" buffalo sub-populations have recently become infected with Corridor disease, requiring total removal or depopulation, which is currently being undertaken. In addition, we have also recently experienced two outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in project calves, one of which occurred in the FMD buffer zone, and this outbreak had repercussions on certain sectors of South Africa's international agricultural trade.

It has thus become necessary to make an amendment of the Animal Diseases Regulations that again prohibits the movements of buffalo. This in effect puts a moratorium on all buffalo movements out of the specified controlled areas for Foot and mouth disease and Corridor/Buffalo disease. This will bring forward the phasing out deadline of 31st December 2011 for all buffalo breeding projects that make use of "infected" parent stock. As provided for in the regulation amendment, we are investigating the possibility for legal advice in this regard.

Kind regards,

Acting **DIRECTOR: ANIMAL HEALTH**