

Foot-and-mouth disease – cattle

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) is a highly contagious disease which affects all cloven-hoofed animals including cattle, buffalo, pigs, sheep, deer, camelids (alpacas, llamas and camels) and goats. Australia is free from the disease.

What are the signs of FMD?

Cattle affected by FMD may:

- show dullness and poor appetite
- drool
- develop lameness
- develop blisters inside the mouth, on the tongue, cheeks, gums, lips and palate
- develop blisters between the claws, along the top of the feet, teats and udder
- have fever and depression
- produce less milk
- develop mastitis
- have abortions
- die (up to 50% of calves).

How does FMD spread?

FMD spreads rapidly through close contact between animals as the virus is excreted in:

- breath
- saliva
- mucous
- milk
- faeces.

FMD virus can also spread through:

- animal products such as meat, bones, untreated hides and dairy products
- food scraps
- vehicles and equipment
- clothing and footwear
- wind.

What do I do if I suspect FMD?

FMD is a notifiable disease. If you suspect the disease in your animals, you must report it to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 or to your local vet.



Photos: European Commission for the Control of FMD and Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (Victoria).