

RE-ENTRY INTO THE EU BEEF MARKET BY BOTSWANA

Communication from Botswana

The following communication, received on 29 June 2012, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Botswana.

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1. The EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) carried out a mission from 25 to 28 January 2011 in order to evaluate the operation of controls over the production of fresh bovine meat, and meat products destined for export to the European Union, as well as certification procedures. A report DG (SANCO)/2011-6119-MR was later published. Actions by the Director of Veterinary Services included delisting of export establishments to enable Botswana to address the findings made during the mission. An Action plan was drawn to respond to these recommendations. Actions included roles for the producers, slaughterhouses and traceability of slaughter cattle.
 2. On 29 April 2011, Botswana suspected an outbreak of foot and mouth disease (FMD) in zone 6 at Butale Syndicate crush in cattle. The suspicion was on clinical basis, which was confirmed later by virus isolation by Botswana Vaccine Institute (BVI), an OIE Regional FMD Reference Laboratory. The virus was typed as SAT2. Virus sequencing revealed that the virus is closely related to a virus isolated in 2010 in the Mozambique outbreak. Zone 6 shares a common boundary to the north east with Zimbabwe and Butale Syndicate crush is about 30 km from the Zimbabwean border. Consequent to the outbreak, zone 6 and other zones lost the recognition by the OIE as FMD free without vaccination.
 3. Based on the socioeconomic and epidemiological factors, existing physical barriers, livestock movement patterns, predominant farming systems in the outbreak area, animal husbandry and the shortest possible period to regain the FMD free status, stamping out was adopted as the most appropriate and pragmatic strategy. The strategy included; establishing a containment zone, emergency vaccination in cattle, goats and sheep and ultimately depopulation of cattle in the containment zone. Botswana submitted an application to the OIE for an approval of a containment zone and for the former FMD free zones without vaccination prior to the outbreak to be reinstated. This was approved by the OIE in October 2011.
 4. Completion of actions at the export establishments was completed by April 2012 and this enabled the Director of Veterinary services to present a re-listing submission to the European Union on 9 May 2012.
 5. Following the listing of Botswana export establishment in the EU TRACES system on 27 June 2012, Botswana beef can now enter the EU territory.
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