

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY

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TO: ALL STATE VETERINARY OFFICES

PRESS RELEASE No. 1

**Announcement of precautionary measures following the sighting of two buffaloes in
Ekwenye area of Okakarara Constituency, in Otjozondjupa Region**

The purpose of this press release is to inform members of the public about the precautionary animal health measures which the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) has put in place since the sighting of two buffaloes in Ekwenye area of Okakarara Constituency, in Otjozondjupa Region.

Background

On the 16th of August 2011, two buffaloes were sighted at Ekwenye. African buffaloes are known carriers of the virus which causes foot and mouth disease (FMD), a highly contagious disease of livestock (cattle, goats, sheep and pigs) and game. If an outbreak of FMD occurs it will result in the banning of exports of animals and animal products. Precautionary measures have to be taken in case they have been in contact with livestock in the area. Namibia's livestock and game industries contribute significantly to the country's economy and therefore a ban in exports and restrictions to local marketing activities will have serious economic implications.

Current Situation

1. Immediately after the buffaloes were sighted, officials from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and MAWF were deployed to track down and destroy the two buffaloes.
2. Both buffaloes have been tracked down and destroyed with assistance from the community. Laboratory test samples were collected and are being analysed.

Precautionary Measures to Protect the Meat Industry

MAWF hereby announces the following precautionary measures in terms of the Animal Disease and Parasites Act, Act No.13 of 1956:

1. The following areas are hereby declared as restricted areas where cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, game and any cloven-hoofed animal may not be removed with immediate effect for a minimum of 21 days:

a. **Otjozondjupa:**


- Otiwarongo State Veterinary District: Okakarara, Okondjatu, Ojituuo and Okamatapati
- Garm
- Okahandja State Veterinary District: a band of two farms bordering Okakarara

b. **Omaheke:**

- Ojineene
 - Epukiro
 - Ojombinde
 - Eiseb
- c. A width of two commercial farms bordering the restricted areas in Otiwarongo, Okahandja & Gobabis Veterinary districts.
 - d. Farms that have received animals from the restricted areas in the past 21 days prior to this press release.
2. All animal gathering activities such as auctions and shows in the restricted areas are hereby suspended with immediate effect for a minimum of 21 days.
 3. Roadblocks will be set up at strategic points in order to ensure compliance with the above measures.
 4. Intensified surveillance activities by veterinary officials will commence immediately.
 5. Any sick animals should be reported to your nearest veterinary office.
 6. Farmers and members of the public are kindly requested to be on the lookout for any stray buffaloes and report to the nearest veterinary office, police or Nature Conservation (Ministry of Environment and Tourism).

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry further advises that these are temporary measures and therefore urges the general public to be patient and cooperate with the officials. The measures have been put in place in the interest of the farming community and the country at large.

The Ministry wishes to thank the community and all those involved in the sighting and subsequent destruction of the two animals.


Mr Andrew Ndishishi
Permanent Secretary

