

Foot and Mouth Disease - Information for wild game harvesters

What is Foot and Mouth disease?

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) is a highly contagious animal disease that affects all cloven-hoofed animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, camelids, deer and pigs. Cloven-hoofed animals are those with a split toe. It can cause severe production losses and significantly impact trade in livestock and livestock products.

Has Australia seen FMD before?

Australia is classified free of FMD - and we want to stay that way. FMD has not occurred in Australia since 1872. An outbreak in Australia would devastate the Australian wild game and livestock industries. It would also have significant flow on effects throughout our communities.

It's important to remain on alert for FMD as this serious disease of livestock continues to spread in neighbouring countries.

How do wild game animals (wild boar, feral goats and deer) become infected?

Wild game animals can become infected with FMD virus by:

- eating contaminated food products
- close contact with infected animals
- contact with contaminated clothes or equipment.

The greatest risk of introduction is from people illegally bringing food products into Australia or having been to a contaminated area overseas and bringing it back on their clothes or shoes.

The virus can remain for long periods in blood, faeces, dried animal secretions, soil, straw, hair, clothing and leather.

People food is not pig food

The spread of FMD has been linked to feral and domestic pigs eating food waste. You can help protect against FMD by:

- always disposing of food waste and scraps properly so pigs can't access and eat them.
- never feeding pigs swill, which is food or food scraps that has come into contact with or contains animal matter such as meat and meat products.

Swill feeding is illegal in all states and territories of Australia, including Queensland. If you suspect swill feeding, report it to:

Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

How can I report signs of FMD?

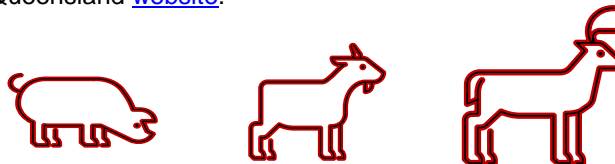
Early detection is vital.

If you suspect FMD you must report it immediately on the **Emergency Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888**

The signs of FMD in wild game animals is characterised by vesicles and erosions:

- in the mouth and nostrils
- on teats
- on skin between the claws / toes
- on the heel
- at the junction between the hair-producing skin of the lower limb and the animal's claw / toe
- lameness.

For more information on clinical signs of FMD, specifically in pigs, sheep and goats, visit the Business Queensland [website](#).



How can we prepare for and prevent FMD?

DO

- advise farmers or producers before coming onto their property to hunt wild game if you have recently returned from an overseas trip
- wear disposable or washable protective clothing (aprons / gloves / overalls) when dressing feral pigs
- inspect all carcasses and carcass parts for evidence of disease or illness
- clean and disinfect all equipment on site
- check in with farmers before field harvesting and comply with all farm biosecurity requirements
- only hunt on one property each night
- thoroughly clean and disinfect vehicle after each night's harvesting.

DON'T

- hunt wild game for at least 7 days if you have just returned from overseas and been on a farm or in contact with livestock
- wear footwear, clothing and equipment that is contaminated with mud, animal manure and mucus when commencing each night's field harvesting activities
- transport wild game (pigs) unless authorised
- keep feral pigs at home
- use swill to feed or trap feral pigs
- leave leftovers from your meals in the hunting area.

More information

You can find out more about the disease on the Australian [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website](#) or the [Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website](#) for livestock disease preparedness.

For information about food safety, visit the [FSANZ website](#) or call Safe Food Queensland on (07) 3253 9800 or free call 1800 300 815 (QLD only).