



## **RMIS Announces FMD Working Group and Progress on Strategic Response Plan**

*Pretoria, 17 June 2025* — Following the activation of its Operational Centre (OC) and the rollout of Phase 1 of its coordinated response to the escalating Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak, Red Meat Industry Services (RMIS) is actively implementing the key actions set out in its initial response plan. These include the formal appointment of the FMD Working Group and the initiation of critical actions to manage the outbreak, safeguard market access, and strengthen the red meat industry's long-term resilience.

The FMD Working Group has been formally appointed and includes leading experts in veterinary science, diagnostics, disease control, and industry representatives. The group is mandated to guide a structured, time-bound response focused on vaccination, disease containment, and the development of sustainable biosecurity systems.

The formal response plan was drafted by **Prof Dietmar Holm**, Professor and Deputy Dean at the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Veterinary Science. He worked independently from the Working Group's internal deliberations to ensure the final document remained objective, clear, and unbiased, while still reflecting the group's shared strategic direction.

### **FMD Working Group Members:**

- Dr Baty Dungu – Veterinary & Vaccinology Specialist
- Prof Francois Maree – Centre for Viral Zoonosis, Dept of Medical Virology, University of Pretoria
- Dr Gerhard Neethling – General Manager, Red Meat Abattoir Association (RMAA)
- Dr Livio Heath – Research Team Manager: Vaccine Production, ARC Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute
- Dr Mark Chimes – Programme Manager: Animal Health & Welfare, Milk SA
- Dr Peter Evans – CEO, South African Pork Producers Organisation (SAPPO)
- Dr Kabols le Riche – RMIS Board Director: Animal & Public Health
- Dr Danie Odendaal – CEO, Veterinarian Network
- Dr Dirk Verwoerd – Feedlot Veterinarian, Karan Beef

- Dr Shaun Morris – Consulting Feedlot Veterinarian
- Dr Stuart Varrie – Industry Veterinarian: Wool
- Dr Hendrik Hansen – Private Veterinarian: FMD Forum
- Dr Adriaan Olivier – Industry Veterinarian: Ostrich
- Dr Anthony Davis – Private Veterinarian: Dairy
- Dr Phillip Oosthuizen – COO, Red Meat Industry Services (RMIS)
- Dr Frikkie Mare – CEO, Red Meat Producers Organisation (RPO)

As the response progresses, RMIS will continue to communicate further updates and developments as they are confirmed.

**ENDS**

**Media Enquiries:**

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