

Contingency Planning Considerations for Livestock Haulers & Transporters Before an FMD Outbreak



Purpose

This document guides livestock haulers and transporters to develop a “what if” or contingency plan before a foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak. The goal is to lessen the impact on animals, the transportation business, and others involved in the livestock industry.

Introduction to FMD

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) is a highly contagious animal disease.

- It affects two-toed (cloven-hooved) animals such as cattle, swine, sheep, goats, and deer.
- FMD is not a human health or food safety concern.
- The United States has not had FMD since 1929.
- It is found in over two-thirds of the countries of the world.

If an FMD outbreak happens in the U.S., controlling the spread to livestock will include:

- A 72-hour national movement standstill for all cloven-hooved livestock and their products.
- Movement permits in areas around infected livestock after the standstill lifts.

How would a standstill impact your business and your customers? What if you need to move cattle in the next few days? Prepare now before the chaos of an outbreak.

Prepare for a National Movement Standstill

People hauling livestock will need to be quickly informed about the stop movement orders and next steps. National and local news outlets should broadcast the official “start time” for the standstill. There may be a 12-hour grace period. This should allow animals to reach their destination or return to their origin to be cared for. Livestock movement will be restricted after 72 hours in the areas around infected animals. This might include entire states or regions.

- More info is available in the “[What to Expect in a National Movement Standstill](#)” document.

Communicating with Origin, Destination

An FMD outbreak will cause changes in routines. Transportation companies, haulers, farmers, and ranchers should set up a communication plan before an outbreak. Consider including:

- Who should be communicated with:
 - Contacts at origin and destination,
 - Animal owners (if different from above),
 - State Veterinarian for the origin state, and
 - USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Office.
- Who is responsible for gathering details and planning routes (individual drivers, animal owners, dispatch, or other company representatives).
- When and how haulers should be alerted of changes in routines, routes, and expectations.
- What methods of communication will be used (call, email, text, fax, etc.).

Considerations for Livestock on the Road

Haulers should talk with the transportation company, dispatcher, origin, destination, and/or owner of livestock to discuss next steps. Livestock needs must be met. Animals must not be abandoned in trailers, at livestock markets, buying stations, or other areas where long-term feeding, watering, and caretaking are not available.

Options may include:

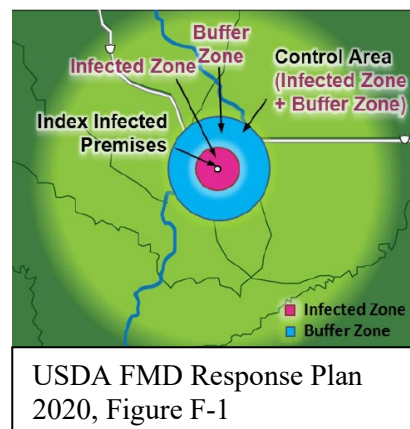
- Returning livestock to the origin if:
 - The origin has infected animals or is being investigated (suspected of FMD).
 - Ownership has not yet changed hands (moving to a livestock market, buying station, packing plant).
 - Moving to an exhibition, rodeo, or other public or private event where other livestock are held.
- Continuing to the destination if:
 - Loaded animals are not infected, suspected of being infected, or in contact with infected animals.
 - Animals are moving to a slaughter plant.
 - Moving to a rancher's base property, public lands, farm that purchased animals, or another pasture.
- Taking animals to another location capable of housing, feeding, watering, and caring for the livestock if return is not possible or the destination will not accept livestock.
 - This location should be arranged by the owner of the livestock.
 - The state may or may not identify specific locations.
 - Animal well-being should **always** be the primary concern.
- The length of transport time for the animals and driver must be considered. Officials may waive or extend current transportation hour limits.

Once animals are unloaded, no new animal movements can happen until the standstill lifts.

- Backhauls that were once scheduled will not be allowed until the standstill lifts.
- Plan for at least 72-hours of downtime.

During the Standstill

- Prepare to re-start movement with trailers that are cleaned and disinfected.
 - More information is available in the "[Livestock Hauler/Transporter Enhanced Biosecurity Steps for FMD Prevention](#)" document.
- Federal and state officials will be setting up Control Areas around infected premises (pictured right).
 - Owners will be notified by the State or USDA if they are within a Control Area¹.
 - Animals will be put under quarantine with no movement in or out without a permit issued by the state.
- Livestock haulers/transporters may be contacted by state or federal officials during the standstill if they hauled animals to/from infected premises.
- Providing information to officials can help protect other animals from getting sick.
- Learn about FMD, Secure Beef Supply (SBS) and Enhanced Biosecurity:
 - FMD Overview video: [watch \(7:36 mins\)](#)
 - SBS Overview video: [watch \(6:51 mins\)](#)
 - Enhancing Biosecurity Against FMD video: [watch \(5 min\)](#)



Restarting Movement – Permits

Even after the standstill is lifted it will not be “business as usual”. FMD is very contagious, and Control Areas may be added daily. Movement in the Control Areas will be by permit only, based on risk. States may have movement restrictions even if livestock are not in a Control Area. The State Veterinarians and USDA will be reliable sources of information. Check their websites for permit requirements.

¹ A Control Area should be at least 10 kilometers (6.21 miles) beyond the perimeter of the closest Infected Premises. [USDA FMD Response Plan](#), October 2020.

Livestock owners in Control Areas, not contract haulers, are responsible for requesting a movement permit from the State. A set of criteria needs to be met.

- The [Secure Beef Supply \(SBS\) Plan provides movement permit guidance criteria](#). For instance, owners:
 - Must ensure the destination premises is willing to accept the cattle.
 - Must ensure the cattle have no evidence of infection.
 - May be required by the state to have an acceptable SBS enhanced biosecurity plan in place.

Contract Hauling in an FMD Outbreak

Livestock haulers/transporters should expect the following from animal owners/managers:

- Expectations for trailer cleaning and disinfection before arrival,
- Visitor agreement – prepare to read and sign agreeing to follow biosecurity steps,
- Phone number to call upon arrival or the place to check in before loading or unloading, and
- A copy (paper or electronic) of the movement permit issued by the State.

Haulers should be prepared to follow:

- Enhanced biosecurity² steps at the origin and destination.
 - Routine biosecurity steps are not enough to protect cattle from FMD because it is very contagious.
 - The FMD virus can be carried in trailers, on handling equipment, clothing, footwear, and other personal items (hats, gloves, cell phones) that may have manure, urine, or other bodily fluids from infected animals.
 - More information is available in the “[Livestock Hauler/Transporter Enhanced Biosecurity Steps for FMD Prevention](#)” document.
- Transportation routes described on the permit.
- Biosecurity steps during transport as described on the permit.
- State entry requirements.
- Other directions from officials managing the FMD outbreak.

Additional Resources

The Secure Beef Supply website has additional resources available at: www.securebeef.org

Acknowledgements

Development of this material was made possible, in part, through a grant provided to the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association from the USDA APHIS through the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program (NADPRP). It may not necessarily express APHIS’ views. It was reviewed by representatives from the cattle industry, state and federal agencies, veterinary practice, and academia.

² Enhanced biosecurity involves extra steps for protecting cattle from exposure to FMD.