



National Animal Health Forum

Linking Animal Health

**Strategizing to manage
emerging animal
diseases in South
Africa**

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What are emerging diseases? What are re-emerging disease

- **Emerging infectious diseases** are **infections** that have recently appeared within a population or those whose incidence or geographic range is rapidly increasing or threatens to increase in the near future. **Emerging infections** can be caused by: Previously undetected or unknown **infectious** agents.
- **Re-emerging** infectious **diseases** are **diseases** that once were major health problems globally or in a particular country, and then declined dramatically, but are again becoming health problems for a significant proportion of the population

What would be an effective Strategy to Control these diseases?

- In the past society would have expected the state to take control.
- This is no longer the case (in RSA or Worldwide)
- We need to use the “Veterinary team”
 - Vets - state – DAFF and Provincial Veterinary structures
 - Vets – Private
 - Veterinary organisations – SAVA;SAVC;BVF
 - Animal health technicians
 - Farmers
 - Farmer organisations
 - Medical colleagues (One Health)

NAHF should play a facilitator role between the most important stakeholders to ensure SAs food security and safety



Strategy needs to be set and implemented at different scales

South Africa has a number of clear stakeholders to implement strategy on:

- Food exports
- Food security
- Food safety

←--- Facilitator role between stakeholder groups

National/Provincial

Government
Set strategy & policy

National/Provincial

DAFF & SAVC
Create enabling environment for implementation

Provincial

Producer organisations & SAVA
Communicate requirements

Farm

Producers & Vet professionals
Implement (on-the-ground)



Facilitate relationships & communication

Requirements for an effective veterinary service

From the OIE website

- Well Qualified
- Registered Vets – with legal disciplinary provisions
- Adhere to principles of veterinary ethics
- Good knowledge of veterinary legislation
- Control of veterinary certification and drug prescriptions
- Obey the laws and legislation
- Must be honest, independent and fair regardless of political, financial and any other pressures
- Undertake practice in their field of expertise with the required competence and resources available
- Personal responsibility must be taken for any certificate signed
- Integrity of veterinary certification is central to national interest, continuity of trade and regulation of the profession
- It is unacceptable to sign a certificate that is untrue, misleading, inaccurate or where there is a demonstrable conflict of interest
- Expectation of continued education to update competencies

Do we have the ability to control disease?

Summary from PVS report by OIE

- We have a well qualified profession with good legislation in place
- We have modern, responsible farmers
- We have a supportive Veterinary Department (DAFF)
- We have 9 Provincial Veterinary Departments.
- We have finances from government and organised agriculture
- We have a structured meat inspection (food safety) system but this is not functional (yet?)
- We still have strong interpersonal relationship between vets
- We still have segmented agriculture vs. commercial, emerging, communal and subsistence

Do we have the ability to control disease?

Summary from PVS report by OIE

- We DON'T have a structured chain of command
- We DON'T have enough resources at National level
- We DON'T have proper veterinary oversight of drugs
- We DON'T have proper disease control measures (are too reactive)
- We DON'T have a unified private/state system with good interaction and compensation by the state for state functions supplied by private vets.
- We don't have a proper national database or a traceability and animal ID system.
- We don't have a nationally co-ordinated plan of where we want to go or be. This relates to both DAFF and the private sector

Can we control newly introduced disease?

- Yes
 - But at a reactive level!

- If we cannot work together to control and safeguard what we have.....!

Veterinary strategy

- The veterinary strategy is a plan.

BUT

- Can the state go it alone?
- Can commercial farmers ignore subsistence agriculture?
- Can commercial farmers achieve anything lasting without state support?
- Can we achieve anything by confrontation?
- Can we achieve anything without all holding hands and all getting involved?

Why are we here?



What does the AHF stand for?

- Public private co-operation (partnerships)
- Taking animal production to new health and production levels
- Food security
- Food safety
- The ability of all parties to work together for common good
- Find solutions that strengthen relationships

What do we need to control emerging diseases?

- The same as to control diseases present !
- A national strategy
- A national (including provinces) will to make it happen
- State and Private respect of the law AND how to implement it
- A move away from the individual – “what can I get away with” attitude
- Individual profit incentives BUT working together for common good
- PUBLIC / PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The last words should be given to two veterinarians met during the mission. A private veterinarian acknowledged the need for the VS to “recognise all farmers as individuals” and a young public veterinarian defined its mission as “to be visible, in contact with farmers, to supervise directly the work of my veterinary para-professionals, to be available whatever is needed to find a solution”.

**SOME PEOPLE WANT
IT TO HAPPEN, SOME
WISH IT WOULD
HAPPEN, OTHERS
MAKE IT HAPPEN.**

