

Foot and Mouth disease detected in Cyprus

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Foot and mouth disease has been detected in Cyprus.

The UK Chief Veterinary Officer is urging livestock keepers to remain vigilant to the clinical signs of Foot and Mouth disease (FMD) following the confirmation of the disease in cattle and sheep in Larnaca, Cyprus.

The UK Government has taken action and has applied restrictions on certain Cypriot commercial imports to Great Britain. These measures are necessary to mitigate the risk of disease and to safeguard UK livestock, agricultural production and biosecurity.

There are no cases in the UK currently. FMD poses no risk to human or food safety, but is a highly contagious viral disease of cattle, sheep, pigs and other cloven-hoofed animals such as wild boar, deer, llamas, and alpacas. Livestock keepers should therefore be absolutely rigorous about their biosecurity.

FMD causes significant economic losses due to production losses in the affected animals as well as loss of access to foreign markets for animals, meat, and milk for affected countries.

Commercial imports of cheeses from Cyprus, including halloumi, remain permitted provided they meet the heat treatment requirements and are accompanied by the mandatory health certificate.

Personal imports of meat and dairy (including halloumi) from the EU remain prohibited in line with restrictions brought in last year.

The UK will continue to apply proportionate, science-based measures to protect animal health while facilitating safe trade.

UK Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Christine Middlemiss said:

Foot and Mouth disease has now been confirmed in Cyprus, we remain in contact with our European counterparts to understand the latest situation.

Robust plans are already in place to minimise the risk of disease incursion to support Britain's farming community and food security.

Livestock keepers are reminded to continue exercising the upmost vigilance for signs of disease, follow scrupulous biosecurity and report any suspicion of disease immediately to the Animal and Plant Health Agency.

Since 12 April 2025, travellers have been banned from bringing cattle, sheep, goat, and pig meat, as well as dairy products, from EU countries into Great Britain for personal use. This followed a rise of disease cases across mainland Europe. All travellers are urged to ensure they are not bringing these products into the country.

Restrictions

The restrictions cover the import hay and straw, live animals of FMD-susceptible species such as cows and sheep, germplasm, fresh meat, meat products unless appropriately heat treated, milk and dairy products unless suitably treated, and animal by-products such as pet food.

If you're an importer or exporter, read about the import restrictions for foot and mouth disease.

What you can do

Clinical signs to be aware of vary depending on the animals, but in cattle the main signs are sores and blisters on the feet, mouth and tongue with potentially a fever, lameness and a reluctance to feed. In sheep and pigs, signs tend to manifest with lameness with potential for blistering.

If you're an animal keeper, read about how to spot foot and mouth disease and report it.

Maintaining good biosecurity is essential to protecting the health and welfare of herds and critical to preventing the spread of diseases such as FMD and preventing an outbreak spreading.

Foot and mouth disease is a notifiable disease and must be reported. If you suspect foot and mouth disease in your animals, you must report it immediately by calling:

- 03000 200 301 in England
- 0300 303 8268 in Wales
- your local Field Services Office in Scotland

For more information, visit: Imports, exports and EU trade of animals and animal products: topical issues - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foot-and-mouth-disease-detected-in-cyprus>