



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES
&
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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Date: 4th November, 2019

Attention: All County Directors of Veterinary Service

All County Directors of Health

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**JOINT RIFT VALLEY FEVER ALERT STATEMENT FOR THE OCTOBER
TO DECEMBER SHORT RAIN SEASON**

On the 2nd of October 2019, the Kenya Meteorological Department issued an alert for heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding in the October-November – December short rain season. The outlook predicts enhanced rainfall in most parts of Western, Central, Northern and Coastal counties.

Flooding provides ideal conditions for increased mosquito population and consequently, increased risk of Rift Valley Fever and other vector-borne diseases.

The Director General for Health and the Director of Veterinary Services, therefore, advises the County veterinary and health services to monitor and enhance surveillance in order to remain vigilant to the potential occurrence and spread of RVF in animals and/or humans. More specifically, all county heads of human and animal health are requested to:



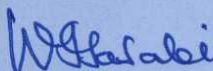
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1. Increase awareness of RVF presentation and case definition to farmers, front-line human and animal health workers including veterinarians, medical doctors, clinical officers, nurses, laboratory technicians, workers in abattoirs and animal markets.
2. Activate/re-activate multi-sectoral rapid response teams for rapid deployment to areas reporting suspected RVF cases to support prompt investigations and response
3. Include occupational and exposure hazards (for butchers, slaughter house personnel, veterinarians and assistants) in communication campaigns and public awareness.
4. Strengthen disease surveillance: active surveillance through serological surveillance of sentinel herds and syndromic surveillance for animals in at-risk areas (especially unusual abortion storms at any stage of pregnancy among small ruminants (camels and cattle). This should include surveillance in markets or places where large numbers are traded or congregate.
5. Enhance surveillance for fevers of unknown origin especially in patients with close link to livestock.
6. Implement best practices for reducing the risk of human exposure;
 - Wear gloves and other appropriate protective clothing when handling sick animals or their tissues, or when slaughtering animals;
 - Blood, milk or tissue/meat should be thoroughly cooked before consumption;
 - Protect self against the risk of mosquito bites by using impregnated mosquito nets, personal insect repellents if available, light colored clothing (long-sleeved shirts and trousers), and by avoiding outdoor activities during peak biting times of the vector species.
7. Promote targeted vaccination by trained personnel of susceptible animals in known at-risk areas



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- The use of vaccination as a control option for RVF aims to limit virus circulation in enzootic areas and to prevent epidemics in disease free areas and is most effective when used in conjunction with other control strategies, including surveillance, quarantine and movement controls. However, vaccination is not recommended in the event of known or ongoing RVF virus circulation, as inappropriate vaccination can exacerbate the spread of virus transmission.
8. Good coordination between public health and animal health services in affected counties should be activated, as well as celerity and transperence in notification. This will be helpful in rapid risk management, decision making and regional coordination, and will need to be continued and shared among the counties of the region.
 9. To aid in early detection of a RVF outbreak events, all fevers of unknown origin, hepatic and hemorrhagic syndromes in humans should be investigated for RVF especially for cases linked to livestock. In animals, all cases of abortions and high fatality rate among young livestock should be reported and investigated immediately.
 10. Blood samples should be collected from human suspected cases and sent to KEMRI laboratories for analysis (contact Victor Ofula on 0722899066)
 11. Blood samples from suspect animals should be sent to the nearest Regional Veterinary Laboratory or the Central Veterinary Laboratory (contact Eunice O. on 0723690602, alt. number 0704223650)


Dr. J. Wekesa Masasabi
Ag. Director General for Health


Dr. Obadiah N. Njagi PhD,
Director of Veterinary Services



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