Verżjoni Elettronika

L.N. 79 of 2025

VETERINARY SERVICES ACT
(CAP. 437)

Prevention and Control of Foot and Mouth Disease Rules, 2025

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by article 5 of the Veterinary Services Act, the Minister responsible for veterinary services, has made the following rules:-

Citation and commencement.

1. (1) The title of these rules is the Prevention and Control of Foot and Mouth Disease Rules, 2025.

(2) These rules shall come into force on 2nd May 2025.

Interpretation.

2. (1) In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

Cap. 437.

"Act" means the Veterinary Services Act;

"public activity" means any activity open to the public, of whatever size, and shall include agricultural fairs, performances, exhibitions, pageants, educational activities and processions with the involvement of animals;

"Regulation (EU) 2016/429" means Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law'), as may be amended from time to time.

(2) Unless the context otherwise requires, words and phrases used in these rules which are not defined herein, shall have the same meaning as assigned to them in the Act and in Regulation (EU) 2016/429.

Restrictive measures.

3. (1) For the purpose of preventing and controlling foot and mouth disease, the following restrictive measures shall apply to any person and, or animal accordingly:

(a) all entries into Malta of ruminants and swine from the European Union shall be subject to a mandatory quarantine period of fourteen (14) days, at the expense of the owner, before being released into Malta;

(b) the importation into Malta of ruminants and swine from outside the European Union shall be prohibited;

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(c) for a period of fourteen (14) days from arrival into Malta, any person who went through a protection and, or surveillance zone shall not be allowed to enter and, or visit any place, including farms, in which ruminants and, or swine are held;

(d) vehicles carrying animals shall not enter Malta if they had been through a protection zone and, or a surveillance zone while these rules are in force;

(e) the temporary movement of ruminants and swine within Malta is prohibited when carried out without authorisation by the Director;

(f) public activities shall not involve ruminants and swine;

(g) all farms holding ruminants and, or swine shall follow the instructions given by the Director on biosecurity measures as may be published by the Director or given to them directly, as applicable;

(h) products or objects derived from ruminants and, or swine may not be introduced into Malta from protection and, or surveillance zones for commercial and, or personal purposes;

(i) animal species not susceptible to foot and mouth disease originating from protection and, or surveillance zones shall be subject to specific measures such as the cleaning of hooves and incineration of excrement;

(j) petting farms hosting ruminants and swine shall be closed to the public while these rules remain in force;

(k) food waste or waste derived from cooking and, or all food processing from boats, vessels, other maritime vehicles and airplanes or other aerial vehicles may only be disposed of if they are incinerated in approved incinerators or are not be disposed of in Malta.

(2) The Director may:

(a) do all that is reasonably necessary so that the restrictive measures according to sub-rule (1) are observed;

(b) seize, hold or destroy any animal involved in the breach of restrictive measures according to sub-rule (1);

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(c) grant authorisations so that, in particular cases, the application of a restrictive measure according to sub-rule (1) is derogated, according to conditions as he may impose in the said authorisations, and particularly but not limited to the importation of ruminants and, or swine from outside the European Union;

(d) seize and detain any vehicle that entered Malta or is in Malta after having passed through a protection and, or surveillance zone in breach of rule 1(d), at the expense of the owner and, or the driver of the vehicle, who are liable *in solidum* for said expense;

(e) seize, stop from entering, confiscate and, or destroy any object and, or products derived from ruminants and, or swine when said objects and, or products derived from ruminants and, or swine come from a protection and, or surveillance zone;

(f) debit the owner, transporter and, or driver with all expenses for anything done in accordance with these rules and for such purpose the persons so debited shall be liable *in solidum* for said expenses.

(3) All expenses and, or debit according to these rules shall constitute a civil debt enforceable by the competent court of civil jurisdiction in favour of the Director and shall constitute an executive title according to law.

(4) In the exercise of his responsibilities according to these rules, the Director may request the assistance of the Executive Police.

Offences.

4. Without prejudice to the application of other provisions of the Act and any other law, articles 56 and 57 of the Act shall apply to any person who breaches these rules.

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