

LIVESTOCK

## Biosecurity concern over foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in KZN

LINDA GUMEDE  
linda.gumede@ini.co.za

AMID rising concerns over the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the Mtubatuba district, the KwaZulu-Natal Agricultural Union (Kwanalu), in partnership with the KZN Red Meat Producers' Organisation, hosted a livestock biosecurity workshop in Mooi River recently to address concerns.

In January, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development said an animal vaccination campaign would take place in kwaHlabisa, which had been identified as a hotspot in northern KZN.

Angus Williamson, chairman of the KZN Red Meat Producers' Organisation said biosecurity (measures aimed at preventing the introduction or spread of infection in animals) at

farms and sale points were of the utmost importance.

Sandy la Marque, Kwanalu CEO said until the authorities (the department) provided programmes across the industry, allocated sufficient finance and resources to assist in the organisation and implementation of control measures, it was not enough to control and stop the outbreak.

"Each producer, livestock and

landowner must ensure that any disease does not reach their produce by "self-regulating" at the farm gate," said La Marque.

Reggie Ngcobo, spokesperson for the KZN Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development confirmed that a new outbreak had been detected in Pongolo and there was a panel of agents who had the expertise to supporting the affected

farmers in the DMA.

"The movement protocol and permit system for movement of cloven-hoofed animals remains in place in the reduced the Disease Management Area.

He appealed to all stakeholders to continue complying with the movement restrictions to prevent the escape of the virus out of the affected areas and shorten the duration of the outbreak.