

The accidental entry into Jamaica of a foreign animal disease will have serious repercussions on the availability of food, export trade, public health, and the over-all economy. The seriousness is particularly amplified by Jamaica's already tenuous economic position and malnutrition problem due to the inadequate intake of animal protein.

Foreign animal diseases, exotic animal diseases, or those animal diseases that are known not to exist indigenously or have been eradicated, pose the most serious threat for several reasons. These are, among others, the lack of any level of immunity in the local livestock thus producing an epidemic of catastrophic proportion; establishment of permanent endemicity by recovered animals that become carriers of the pathogen (as in foot-and-mouth disease); lack of an available vaccine to prevent or control the disease (as in African swine fever); and an unfavourable international trade relation with disease-free countries.

Jamaica enjoys an enviable but precarious animal health situation. It is free from many animal diseases that generally plague most of the developing countries. It has been free of foot-and-mouth disease since 1924. No case of hog cholera has been reported for more than ten years. It has been historically free of rabies.

The presence of serious animal diseases (such as African Swine Fever and Food-and Mouth disease) in some of the countries of the Western Hemisphere pose a serious threat to Jamaica. The constant air and sea travel from infected countries makes the local disease-free situation particularly critical and tenuous. Since, in most instances, the introduction of foreign animal diseases is not done by the animals themselves, but by human movement from infected to non-infected areas carrying infected animal products.

Because of the insidiousness of foreign animal diseases and the difficulty of eradicating the diseases once they are introduced, the Veterinary

Services of Jamaica with the assistance of related Government Agencies, must be prepared to mobilize their personnel and resources expeditiously and without delay to cope with an emergency situation following the introduction of any foreign animal disease.

The highly likely possibility of introducing a foreign animal disease through meat and meat products brought in from infected countries and through garbage from airplanes and ships that ply through international routes dictate that the airport and seaport surveillance should be tightened. This is the first line of defense against the introduction of the pathogene.

The destructive threat of many foreign animal diseases to the livestock and poultry industry in particular and to the nation's economy in general, dictates that these diseases should be handled as a national emergency. The Minister of Agriculture is therefore justified to request appropriation for additional funds and to invite the other Ministries to cooperate in the prevention, control and eradication of any foreign animal disease.

Public and farmer information and cooperation are of paramount importance. The public should be well informed of the gravity of foreign animal diseases and how they could participate in preventing their entry into the Island. The farmers should be made aware on how to recognise the early signs of foreign animal diseases and should be instructed and motivated to report suspiciously sick animals to the authorities without delay. Incentives for immediate reporting, such as indemnification, should be provided.

The cardinal rule in dealing with a foreign animal disease is to react with swiftness in containing and isolating the outbreak. It is towards this end that the Veterinary Services and the ancillary services of Jamaica should gear themselves. They should have a plan and the capacity to react with urgency and to completely mobilize their resources to contain any foreign animal disease outbreak within a matter of hours. Time is crucial!

African Swine Fever was recently re-introduced into the Western Hemisphere. The disease entered Brazil in May 1979 and the Dominican Republic in July 1979. Its presence was confirmed in Haiti in December 1979. It moved into Cuba in February 1980. The problem of introduction of a foreign animal disease into Jamaica has never been so real. African Swine Fever is now less than a hundred miles away.

Based on the above premises, this "Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness Plan Manual for Jamaica" was developed.

AHA	Animal Health Assistant
ALGO	Association of Local Government
AO	Administrative Officer
AT	Appraisal Team
DHEO	Disposal and Heavy Equipment Officer
DVS	Director of Veterinary Services
EADPrep	Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness Plan
EADIAF	Emergency Animal Disease Task Force
FC	Field Component
FCh	Fire Chief
IDO	Inspection and Diagnosis Officer
IO	Information Officer
JDF	Jamaica Defence Force
LC	Laboratory Component
LG	Legal Component
LO	Legal Officer
LTL	Laboratory Team Leader
MA	Ministry of Agriculture
MC	Military Component
MO	Military Officer
NEADCOM	National Emergency Animal Disease Committee
OIC/PD	Officer in Charge of Police Detail
OHQ	Operation Headquarters
PC	Police Component
PIADC	Plum Island Animal Disease Center
PO	Police Officer
PVO	Principal Veterinary Officer
PAVO	Parish Veterinary Officer
Q-C/DO	Quarantine and Cleaning/Disinfection Officer
RFC	Regional Field Component
RFCo	Regional Field Coordinator
RVO	Regional Veterinary Officer
RVO/A	Regional Veterinary Officer Assigned
SO	Supply Officer
SVO	Senior Veterinary Officer
TFCo	Task Force Coordinator
VO	Veterinary Officer