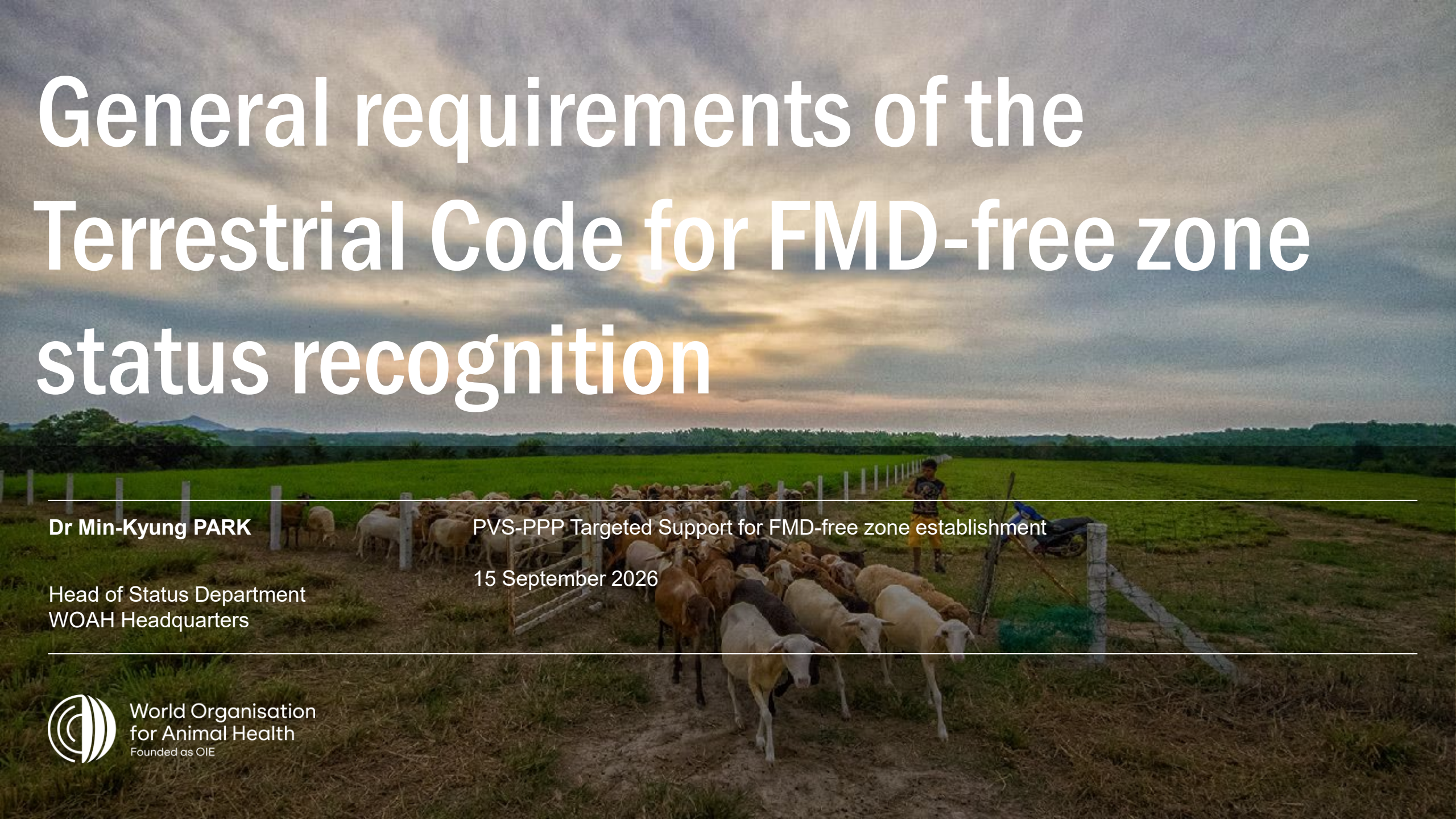
General requirements of the Terrestrial Code for FMD-free zone status recognition



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PVS-PPP Targeted Support for FMD-free zone establishment

15 September 2026

World Organisation for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)

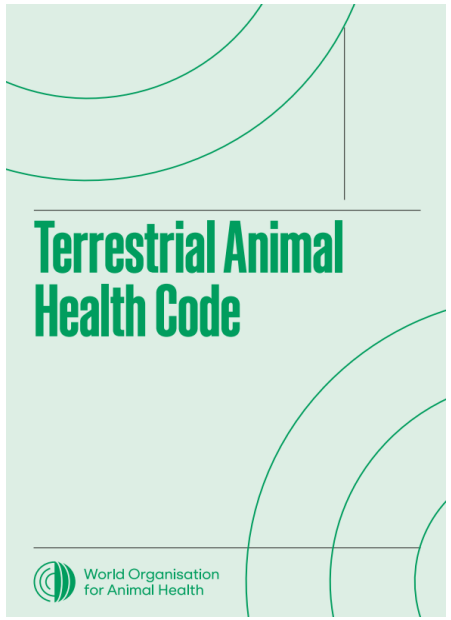
Horizontal Chapters

- Disease notification (1.1.) compliance with WAHIS
- Animal health surveillance (1.4.) surveillance
- Import risk analysis (2.1.)
- Evaluation of Veterinary Services (3.3.)
- Veterinary legislation (3.4.)
- **Zoning and compartmentalisation (4.4.)**
- Vaccination (4.18.)
- Official control programmes (4.19.)
- Import/export procedures (5)

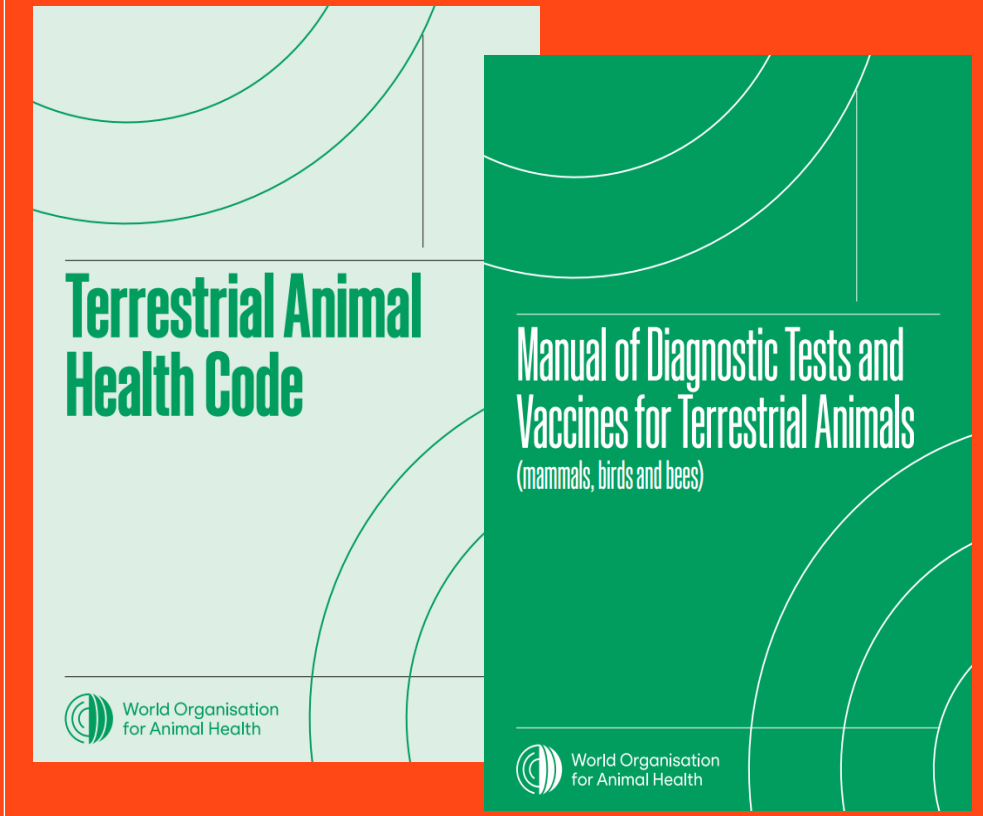
FMD-specific: Chapter 8.8.

Last adoption in May 2024

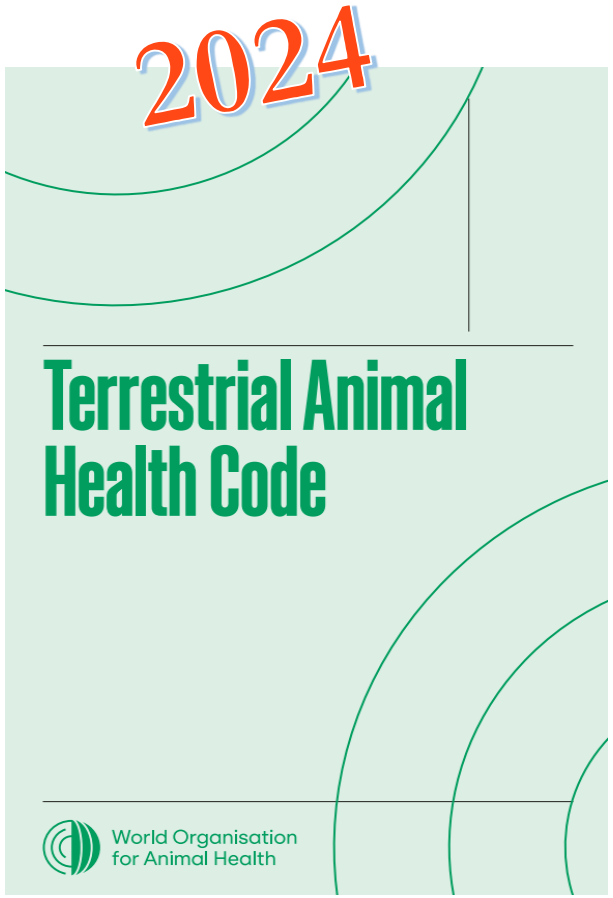
- General provisions, case definition
- Safe commodities
- Criteria for disease status: country, zone or compartment
- Provisions for import of commodities
- FMD surveillance
- Endorsment of control programme



Terrestrial Animal Health Code requirements on FMD



Chapter 8.8. Infection with FMD virus



Article	Topic/provision
8.8.1.	General provisions, including case definition
8.8.2	Safe commodities
8.8.3 to 8.8.11	Articles related to status: FMD-free country (without & with vaccination) /zone/compartment/ Protection zone / Containment zone / Recovery of free status
8.8.12. to 8.8.33.	Recommendations for importation of commodities from - FMD-free countries, zones, or compartments - FMD-infected countries or zones
8.8.34 to 8.8.41.	FMD virus inactivation
8.8.42.	Requirements for endorsement of an official FMD control programme
8.8.43. to 8.8.45.	FMD surveillance: General principles, Methods, Use and interpretation of serological tests

FMD case definition: Article 8.8.1. Point 3

a) **FMDV has been isolated** and identified as such from a sample from a susceptible animal; OR

b) **antigen or nucleic acid specific to FMDV** has been detected in a sample from a susceptible animal,

   i) showing clinical signs consistent with FMD, or
   ii) epidemiologically linked to a confirmed or suspected case of FMD, or
   iii) giving cause for suspicion of previous association or contact with FMDV; OR

c) **antibodies** to structural proteins (SP) or non-structural proteins (NSP) of FMDV, that are not a consequence of vaccination, have been detected in a sample from **a susceptible animal**, showing clinical signs consistent with FMD, or **epidemiologically linked** to a confirmed or suspected case of FMD, or giving cause for suspicion of previous association or contact with FMDV.

Codes and Manuals

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes provide standards for the improvement of animal health and welfare and veterinary public health worldwide, including through standards for safe international trade in terrestrial and aquatic animals and their products. The manuals provide a standardised approach to the diagnosis of the diseases listed in the Terrestrial and Aquatic Codes.



https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/

WOAH Terrestrial Code Glossary definition

SAFE COMMODITY

means a *commodity* that can be traded without the need for *risk* mitigation measures specifically directed against a particular *listed disease*, *infection* or *infestation* and regardless of the status of the country or *zone* of origin for that disease, *infection* or *infestation*.

Article.8.8.2

Safe commodities

When authorising the importation or transit of the following *commodities*, *Veterinary Authorities* should not require any type of FMD-related conditions, regardless of the *animal health status* of the *exporting country* or *zone*:

1. Ultra-high temperature (UHT) *milk* and derivatives thereof;
2. heat-treated *meat products* in a hermetically sealed *container* with a F_0 value of 3 or above;
3. *protein meal*;
4. gelatine;
5. *in vivo* derived bovine embryos collected, processed and stored in accordance with Chapter 4.8.;
6. limed hides, pickled pelts, and semi-processed leather;
7. extruded dry pet food.

Other *commodities* of susceptible *animals* can be traded safely if in accordance with the relevant articles in this chapter.

Article 8.8.4 : FMD free country or zone where vaccination is practised

A country or *zone* may be considered free from FMD where *vaccination* is practised when:

1. have a record of regular and prompt animal disease reporting;
2. no infection with FMDV; no transmission of FMDV
3. the *Veterinary Authority* has current knowledge of, and authority over, all *herds* of domestic and captive *wild* susceptible animals in the country or *zone*;
4. the Veterinary Authority has current knowledge of the distribution and habitat of wild and feral susceptible animals in the country or zone;
5. compulsory systematic vaccination in the target population has been carried out to achieve adequate vaccination coverage and population immunity; based on the epidemiology of FMD in the country or zone, the target population should be defined in accordance with Chapter 4.18.;
6. vaccination has been carried out following appropriate vaccine strain selection;
7. measures to prevent the introduction of the infection have been in place; importations or movements of commodities into the country or zone (between zones within same country)
8. for the **past 24 months** appropriate surveillance has been implemented in accordance with Articles 8.8.43. to 8.8.45.



Passive surveillance for FMD

Passive surveillance, or clinical surveillance, is an essential component of FMD detection and relies on the **routine reporting of suspected cases by sensors or field observers** (and, on the sensors, animal keepers, veterinarians, and other stakeholders).

- The sensitivity and specificity of clinical observations depends on the **criteria used to define a suspected case** and, on the sensors,
- The **case definition** should be standardised.
- Ideally, both positive and those observations ruled out should be recorded and analysed as **indicators of the strategy**.
- This approach is crucial for the **early detection** of potential outbreaks and contributes to overall disease surveillance.



Active surveillance / surveys

It complements passive surveillance and has key objectives:

- Detect FMD virus transmission
- If not detected, support evidence of its absence

Two-Stage Sampling strategy:

- ✓ Selection of farms
- ✓ Selection of animals within farms

- Define the epidemiolocal units (e.g. farm, village, etc.)
- It is important to define the target population, which will guide the interpretation of the results and the selection of epidemiological units.
- Regardless of the strategy for selecting epidemiological units, it must be well justified.



Key considerations (Article 8.8.45.)

- Ensure sampled animals are **identified**, remain on-site, and are **not vaccinated** until retesting is complete.
- In the second sampling, include reactor animals, susceptible animals within the epidemiological unit, and those in contact with reactors in the second sampling, **aiming to sample the same animals as in the first round**.
- If FMDV is absent, antibody reactivity should remain statistically unchanged. FMDV transmission is detected by **an increase in seropositive animals** or **antibody titers** at the second sampling.

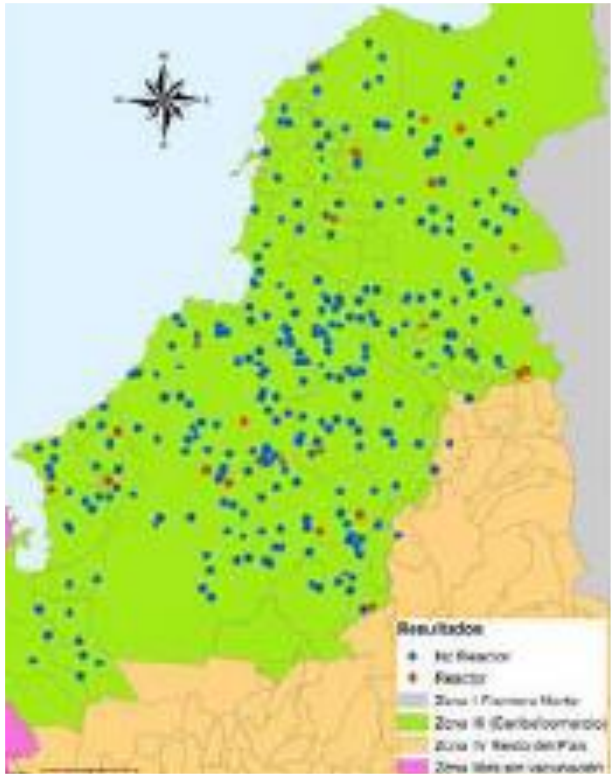


Use of sentinel animals

- **Unvaccinated young animals** or those without maternal immunity can act as sentinels.
- Sentinels should **stay in close contact** with the epidemiological unit for **at least two incubation periods**—remaining seronegative if no FMDV transmission occurs.

Visualising and Analysing the Results

It is crucial that the results of the positive reactors are analysed correctly, considering several factors (Article 8.8.45.):



- ✓ Any reactor in serology should be treated as a potential positive, and **it must be verified as such**.
- ✓ The proportion and strength of seropositive reactors is informative.
- ✓ Consider the **sensitivity and specificity of the tests** combined; for instance, sampling in extensive settings with an imperfect test that does not provide 100% specificity requires justification for the absence of “false” positives.
- ✓ Conduct epidemiological and clinical investigations of the susceptible animals present on the premises.
- ✓ When interpreting the results, the **age of the animal** and its **vaccination status** should be taken into account.
- ✓ is also important to investigate the presence of geographic clusters or reactive animals within the same epidemiological unit.

Trade recommendations (Articles 8.8.13. to 8.8.33.)

NEW

Recommendations for the imports of vaccinated animals to an FMD-free country/zone without vaccination (Article 8.8.14.)

From countries/zones	FMD free without vaccination	FMD free with vaccination	FMD infected
Live animals	x	x	x
Fresh & frozen semen	x	X (frozen)	X (frozen)
in vivo derived embryos of cattle	x	x	x
in vitro produced embryos of cattle	x	x	
Fresh meat	x	x	x
Meat products	x	x	x
Milk and milk products	x	x	x
Blood and meat-meals			x
Wool, hair, bristles, raw hides and skins			x
Straw and forage			x
Skins and trophies from FMD susceptible wild animals	x	x	x

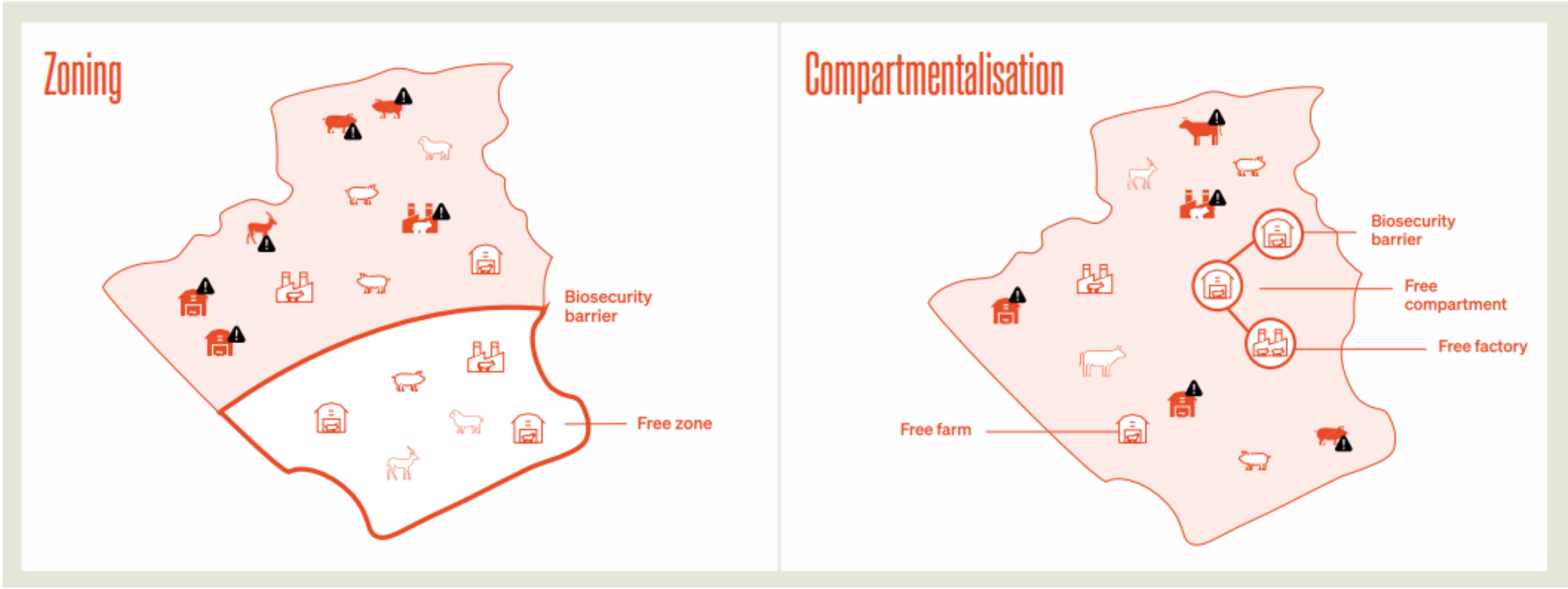
Specific recommendations

- **Direct transfer within a country** of susceptible animals from an infected zone for slaughter in a free zone (whether vaccination is practised or not)

- **Inactivation of FMDV in**
  - meat and meat products of susceptible animals
  - swill
  - wool and hair
  - Bristles
  - raw hides and skins
  - milk and milk products
  - skins and trophies from susceptible animals
  - casings of ruminants and pigs



Zoning vs. Compartmentalisation



Article 8.8.7 : Compartment free from FMD where vaccination is practised

Susceptible animals in the free compartment should be separated from any other susceptible animals by the application of an effective biosecurity plan.

1. have a record of regular and prompt animal disease reporting;
2. a) no infection with FMDV; no transmission of FMDV during the past 12 months;

   b) compulsory systematic vaccination is carried out using a vaccine that complies with the standards described in the Terrestrial Manual, including appropriate vaccine strain selection. The vaccination coverage and population immunity are closely monitored;

   c) animals, semen, embryos and animal products may only enter the compartment in accordance with relevant articles in this chapter;

   d) documented evidence shows that regular clinical, serological and virological surveillance in accordance with Articles 8.8.43. to 8.8.45. is in operation, so as to detect infection or transmission at an early stage with a high level of confidence;

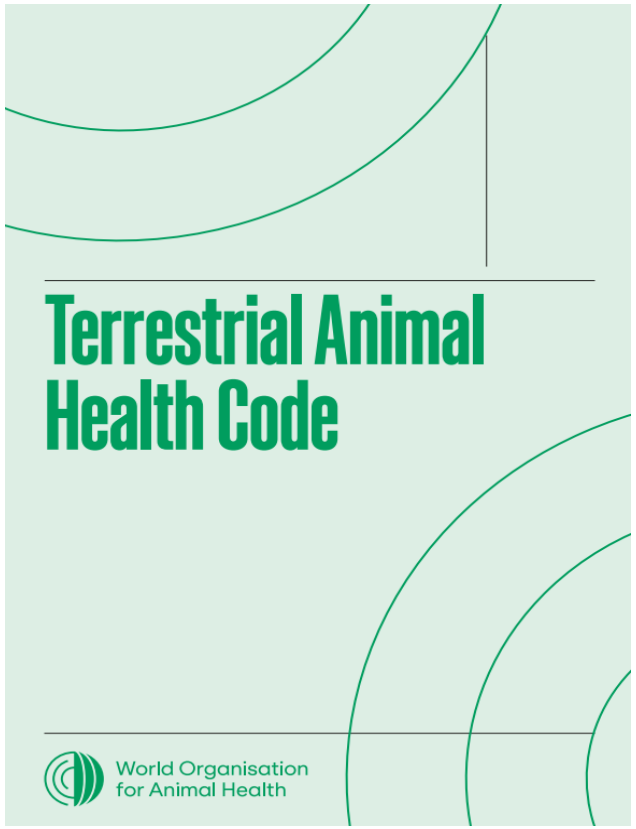
   e) an *animal identification* and *traceability* system in accordance with Chapters 4.2. and 4.3. is in place;



3. a) the biosecurity plan to mitigate the risks identified by the surveillance

The compartment should be approved by the Veterinary Authority. The approval should only be granted when no infection or transmission of FMDV has occurred within a 10-km radius of the compartment during the three months prior to the application of the biosecurity plan.

Zoning: Provisions in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code



www.woah.org/terrestrial-code

- Glossary
- Chapter 4.4. Zoning and Compartmentalisation
- Chapter 8.8. Infection with FMD virus

Principles for defining and establishing a zone

- Extent of a zone/geographical limits established by the *Veterinary Authority*
  - Natural, artificial and/or legal boundaries
  - Made public through official channels
- Management practices: Valid animal identification system and traceability of movements
- Prevent movement of animals and their products across boundaries
- Cooperation of industry and *Veterinary Services* for the development of biosecurity and surveillance









"Containing an animal population or subpopulation"

"Specific animal health status with respect to an infection"

- Animals and herds belonging to the subpopulation should be recognizable
- Valid animal identification system
- The distinct health status should be established and maintained based on appropriate epidemiological separation



- Key principle in terms of the *Terrestrial Code* is to **prevent the introduction** of the pathogen



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Thank you

Official status page: www.woah.org/official-status
For more information please contact: disease.status@woah.org
Terrestrial Code and Manual:
www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/

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