

MARCH NEWS 2026

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VRYSTAAT LANDBOU
FREE STATE AGRICULTURE

ONGEAG



FMD: Minister Forced to Table Clear Vaccination Plan

Best FSA member

Free State Agriculture (FSA) welcomed the urgent ruling by the Pretoria High Court, which compels the Minister of Agriculture to finalise a scheme allowing private vaccination against foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

The court ordered the Minister to promulgate the scheme – which was submitted to the court at the last minute – by 17 April 2026 and the matter was postponed to 28 April 2026. The Minister was also ordered to pay costs, with the court sharply criticizing delays and last-minute submissions by the Department of Agriculture.

This development follows an urgent application brought by FSA, Sakeliga and SAAI to stop government from obstructing the private procurement and administration of FMD vaccines.

While the draft scheme is a step in the right direction, FSA is of the opinion that it remains incomplete and raises serious concerns. Provisions that centralise vaccine procurement and grant broad discretionary powers to the Minister risk perpetuating the very restrictions that have already caused severe disruption to the agricultural sector.

The court's intervention now places clear legal obligations and deadlines on the Minister — a critical step towards restoring certainty in the livestock industry.

FSA remains of the opinion that private vaccination capacity is essential to combat the spread of FMD effectively.



Fransois Wilken

President, Vrystaat Landbou

Global FMD insights

Free State Agriculture represented organised agriculture at the International Forum on Transboundary Animal Diseases and Food Safety conference (TAFS) held in Cape Town on 3 & 4 March 2026.

This global gathering brought together international experts, policymakers and industry leaders to address transboundary animal diseases and strengthen food safety systems worldwide.

A summary of the event is available [here](#).



Landbank

Free State Agriculture met with the new Free State management of Landbank on 23 March 2026.

Landbank has confirmed their commitment to agriculture and is pleased to introduce the following services/products. Click on the item to download the brochure:

1. [Forced Stock Deposits](#)
2. [Blended Finance Scheme \(BFS\) brochure](#)
3. [Agro Energy Fund \(AEF\) brochure](#)
4. [Land Bank Brochure](#)

Landbank would like to share the contact details of their various branches:

1. *Bloemfontein (Provincial office)* - 051-404 1400

Provincial head: Nthako Thaele

Relationship managers:

- Thys Strydom – 051 4041412 / 083 5577309 / MJStrydom@landbank.co.za
- Wesley Shongwe – 051 4041416 / 084 0806218 / WShongwe@landbank.co.za
- Pieter Otto - 051 4041414 / 082 4978587 / PMotto@landbank.co.za

2. *Bethlehem Satellite office* – 058 307 5200

Relationship managers:

- Freddy Humphreys – 058 3075209 / 060 9750273 / FHumphreys@landbank.co.za
- Lampies Jonker – 058 3075222 / 083 7089139 / LPJonker@landbank.co.za

3. *Kroonstad Satellite office* – 056 216 6200

Relationship manager:

- Wilma Muller – 056 2166207 / 082 6946290 / EWDMuller@landbank.co.za



7 Risks That Affect Rural Safety

Free State Agriculture identified seven (7) risks affecting agriculture in the Free State, during the recent District Rural Safety meetings:

- Diesel shortage
- Foot and mouth disease
- Farm attacks and murders
- Livestock theft
- Border security forum meetings
- Burning season
- Maize theft

FSA stressed that the risks are interlinked: fuel shortages weaken security, biosecurity gaps exacerbate disease spread, and crime continues to escalate, creating a compounded threat to both security and agricultural sustainability.

The full report can be downloaded [here](#).



Report poor dirt roads

Following recent heavy rains in the Free State, many gravel roads are again in poor condition.

Members are requested to send a photo, pin drop and brief description of the road (e.g. name/route and problem) to their agricultural association's roads representative, so that it can be shared on the Department's District Roads group.

Enquiries can be directed to jack@vslandbou.co.za

Diesel price hike & price manipulation

Diesel remains a critical input in agricultural production and any significant increases in diesel prices or disruptions in supply will inevitably place additional pressure on farmers and could contribute to higher food prices for consumers.

Free State Agriculture is aware of reports that certain bulk fuel suppliers are withholding diesel from farmers amid market uncertainty. "We will not tolerate any attempt to exploit producers through opportunistic price manipulation or stock restrictions during this period of volatility," says Francois Wilken, president of FSA.

Read the full statement [here](#).





Young farmer conference

Free State Agriculture invites all young farmers to the *Young Farmer conference* which will be presented in Bloemfontein on 16 April.

This is an informal event where young producers come together to tackle real challenges with real solutions.

Get practical insights on:
biosecurity,
your unique leadership
your future with smart financial planning.

Registrations close 9 April. Cost: R200 p.p.

Enquiries: melissa@vslandbou.co.za OR cynthia@vslandbou.co.za

Jongboer Konferensie Program
16 April 2025
Wees deel v.d oplossing

- 8:00 Registrasie
- 9:00 Opening
 - Verwelkoming Jongboer-komitee Voorsitter
 - Boodskap VL Vise-president
 - Boodskap Hoofborg: **AFGR**
 - Spreker: **Dr Fanie Steyn** - "Maak reproduksiedienste en tegnologie deel van jou biosekuriteitsprotokol"
 - Spreker: **Dr Johan Beukes** - Wees (SAAM) deel van die oplossing(S).
- TEE BREEK**
 - Spreker: **Steph Brits** - Toepaslike finansiële en regsbegeleiding."
 - Boodskap 2025 Jongboer v.d Jaar: **Tienie Prinsloo**
- Bedankings
- Konferensie verdaag



Click on the program to enlarge.

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