



VRYSTAAT LANDBOU
FREE STATE AGRICULTURE

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Together for a stronger agriculture in the Free State

Best FSA member

Our recent Congress, held in Bloemfontein on 5 & 6 August, focused primarily on exposing the everyday reality of our farmers.

Our farmers are the foundation of the agricultural value chain and can no longer bear the risk of the entire chain alone. It is time for the farmer to take center stage again!

Discussions have included rural safety, the foot-and-mouth disease issue, input costs and infrastructure.

It is clear that our challenges are great, but that we are stronger when we tackle them **TOGETHER**.

Free State Agriculture will continue to address the realities and interests of our members - our Free State farmers - directly.



President, Free State Agriculture

Increase in crime incidents on farms

Free State Agriculture is appealing to farming communities to be vigilant and alert amid an increase in crime on various Free State farms. This includes, among others, attempted vehicle and tractor theft, dog poisoning, livestock and grain theft, as well as theft of solar equipment.

According to Dr Jane Buys, Safety Risk Analyst at FSA, the nature and extent of the incidents are of concern, as several incidents indicate a similar modus operandi.

Farmers are encouraged to report suspicious activities and incidents immediately and to actively participate in local safety initiatives.

[Read more](#)



Foot and mouth Disease (FMD)

With the new Article 9 regulations, positive herds are immediately vaccinated by the state. If there are no new clinical signs, quarantine can be lifted after 42 days – a big improvement over the previous 6–12 months.

Only 10 new positive cases were recorded in August, but many suspect cases are still awaiting investigation by state veterinarians in the Boshof, Soutpan, Heilbron and Frankfort areas in particular. Rapid reporting and strict movement control on suspect and quarantined farms remain essential. Biosecurity also remains one of the most important ways to limit further spread, especially between farms belonging to the same owner.

State veterinarians have already administered more than 1.5 million doses, which is approximately 50% of the estimated Free State herd. The private sector has allocated a further 700 000 doses to the Free State. If all of this is administered, approximately 70% of the herd will be vaccinated. However, the first 380 cases vaccinated with BVI until the end of February 2026 now urgently need a booster dose to limit the risk of re-infection.

FSA's position remains that we need to vaccinate 90% of the province's livestock herd as soon as possible to achieve herd immunity.

Availability of vaccine

The availability of vaccine remains a bottleneck, despite the fact that vaccine can be imported privately and farmers can obtain it through their private veterinarian and administer it themselves.

Private vaccine is available via:

- Dunevax's Aftodoll-Oil vaccine can be ordered on Buffalo Analytics' website <https://www.buffalo.vet/>
- Biogénesis Bagó's BIOAFTOGEN can be ordered on RMIS' platforms <https://rmis.co.za/fmd-updates/>
- Apply to state veterinarians for voluntary preventive vaccination if you cannot afford to vaccinate yourself.



Grazing rights under ESTA

The Constitutional Court judgment in *Mereki and Others v Moladora Trust* [2025] ZACC 16 once again emphasised the need for clear and properly documented agreements to avoid legal uncertainty and risk.

The judgment ruled, among other things, that long-standing permission — even if not in writing — to graze livestock on private land can be a protected right of use in terms of the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA).

[Read more about the implications for landowners.](#)

Renewed political focus on land expropriation

Recent statements from government circles have raised renewed concerns about the renewed political and legislative focus on land reform, especially the possibility of further constitutional and legislative amendments.

Friedl von Maltitz, vice-president of FSA, believes that farmers have been repeatedly reassured that the Expropriation Act is not aimed at driving land reform through expropriation, but when government representatives themselves present land reform and redistribution as objectives of the broader legislative framework, it is inevitable that landowners and investors will experience further uncertainty.



[Read Free State Agriculture's position here.](#)

Crime Reporting Line

FSA operates a WhatsApp Chatbot where farmers can report all incidents – regardless of whether they have been reported to SAPS.

The system automatically categorizes messages and shares them with Free State Agriculture for follow-up. PLEASE NOTE that the number only receives WhatsApp messages and does not handle calls.



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Property Tax

Free State Agriculture encourages farmers to check the valuation of their property and determine whether it is more or less in line with the market value. The valuation roll is usually available on your local municipality's website, and the valuation should also be indicated on your municipal account.

It is also important to ensure that your property is correctly categorised and valued as agricultural land. If the valuation is significantly higher than the actual market value, you can object. This must be done according to the process set out in the Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004, and within the period indicated in the municipality's notice.

Each municipality has a Property Rates Policy that is confirmed annually. This policy determines the rate at which properties are taxed. For agricultural land, the cent-in-the-rand rate may not, by law, exceed 0.25 (25%) of the residential property rate.

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



Red Meat Forum

Following its involvement in, among other things, ear tags, FMD vaccine and the court case, Free State Agriculture has decided to establish a Red Meat Forum to more strongly represent the voice and interests of the primary red meat producer.

The Free State Agriculture Red Meat Forum will focus on profitability, sustainability and legacy. The Forum is expected to be launched soon and will be open to any red meat producer to join.

Livestock theft will continue to be addressed by FSA's Rural Safety Committee.

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



Golf Day for Rural Safety



Free State Agriculture will once again host our Golf Day for Rural Safety on 18 Sept 2026.

The Free State Agriculture Golf Day aims to raise funds for safety training and initiatives in rural communities. The funds help to equip communities with the necessary knowledge and skills to be more vigilant, identify risks and respond effectively to safety threats.

Team entries close 14 September.

Enquiries: melissa@vslandbou.co.za / 051 444 4609

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