

12.1 Foreign Animal Diseases

This module describes Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) relevance and the practitioner's role. With the increased international movement of people, animals and animal by-products, there is an increased risk to the health status of Canada's national herds through the introduction of such a disease. More information on [FADs](#) is available on the CFIA Web site.

Foreign Animal Disease Relevance

1. Canada is one of a few countries which remain free from a number of serious epizootic diseases of animals. It is a high priority of the CFIA that foreign animal diseases, especially a rapidly spreading disease such as foot and mouth disease, be recognized and then eradicated as soon as possible. The consequences will depend on the size and nature of the outbreak and can be greatly minimized by early identification, containment, and elimination.

The Practitioner's Role

2. Veterinary practitioners are most likely to be the first to encounter and recognize a foreign animal disease that has gained entry into Canada. Early recognition by veterinarians may prevent widespread transmission and great expense to the Canadian public.
3. FADs of concern to the CFIA are those which would have severe economic consequences in Canada, primarily those associated with the loss of export markets.
4. Disinfectants routinely used by a practitioner may not be effective against the agent of a suspected disease. Veterinary practitioners should consult with a CFIA district veterinarian to determine which products are acceptable for use in disinfecting their persons, equipment, and vehicles.
5. The involvement of practising veterinarians with respect to FADs may be summarized as follows:
 - a) Prevention:
 - i. Maintain current knowledge of the FADs most likely to enter Canada. These include, highly pathogenic avian influenza, velogenic Newcastle disease, vesicular stomatitis, foot and mouth disease, swine vesicular disease, hog cholera, African swine fever, anaplasmosis, bluetongue, and pseudorabies. The district veterinarian has information on such diseases.

- ii. Be aware of clinical/necropsy findings which should alert suspicion. Routinely include FADs in differential diagnoses.
- b) Reporting:
- i. Immediately report any suspicion of the existence of a FAD to the nearest district veterinarian.
- c) Control:
- i. If physically present on the farm, **remain on site until the district veterinarian arrives or gives authorization/instructions to leave**, and encourage others on the premises not to leave.
 - ii. During an outbreak, continue to refer suspect cases.
 - iii. Communication with the livestock owner:
 - Inform the owner of suspicions of an exotic animal disease without specifying the disease.
 - Owners will be more willing to comply with regulatory requirements when they are kept informed.