

# DVS- CATTLE SITUATION REPORT 2024

## -Health and Nutrition-

*“Animal health and welfare are vital to beef sustainability. Healthy and comfortable animals have higher production efficiencies and less impact on the environment”*

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FOR CHIEF DIRECTOR –VETERINARY SERVICES  
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## Presentation outline

### Introduction

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### DVS Mandate

### Vector Borne Diseases \*TBDs &Tryps

### Transboundary and Priority Diseases

-Foot and Mouth Disease

-Blackleg

-Anthrax

-Rabies

### Drought situation and mitigatory measures

### Future prospects

# Introduction

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## The livestock subsector contribution to the national economy

- 70% of Zimbabwe's rural population depends on the livestock sub-sector for their livelihood.
- The main livestock species in the country are cattle, goats and poultry.
- The national beef herd stands at 5.7 million with the bulk of these held in the SHF sector.
- Smallholder cattle production systems are characterized by subsistence, extensive and production systems with a slow rate of commercialization (cx by poor calving rates, loss of 500k calves annually)

## Animal diseases and pests major constraints to livestock production

- Livestock production systems are constrained by climate change  
i.e. prolonged dry seasons, poor nutrition and inadequate dry season feed, high stockfeed prices
- transboundary pests and diseases, erratic dipping schedules, high livestock mortalities,
- poor genetic resources and lack of market access.

# DVS mandate

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- To prevent the **introduction, establishment and spread** of animal pests and diseases in Zimbabwe.
- A robust Animal Health Act Chapter 19:01, its supporting regulations and other pieces of legislation in place for effective disease and pest management.
- Veterinary infrastructure dotted across the country ( offices, laboratories, dip tanks, etc).
- A close to 5 000 strong workforce with a fleet of 2 100 motor bikes, 156 motor vehicles and 4 lorries for efficient service delivery to its clients.
  - *Improved staff compliment, extension workers establishment strength of 91%.*
  - *87% motorization of extension workers through provision of motorcycles*
- The animal disease prevention and control activities of Veterinary Services are a **Public Good**.
- These activities have major benefits for agricultural production, food security and safety, public health, animal welfare, access to markets and alleviation of rural poverty.
- National blueprints to drive towards Vision 2030
  - i. *Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy US\$8.2 billion agriculture economy by 2025.*
  - ii. *Livestock growth plan US\$2 billion by 2025.*

# Veterinary Services structure

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## Vector borne diseases –TBDs & Tryps

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- **Ticks and tick-borne diseases adversely impact on 80% of the global cattle population**
  - Tropic and sub-tropical regions
  - Major constraint to livestock production in the world
  - Global losses over US\$18 billion
- **Zimbabwe is not an exception**
  - ±60% annual mortalities in cattle due to ticks and tick-related diseases.
  - Four major tick-borne diseases, namely; **Theileriosis**, Heartwater, Anaplasmosis & Babesiosis.
  - **Theileriosis/January Diseases (JD)** has had a devastating effect on the cattle industry with close to half a million cattle deaths in the last 5 years

\*Other VBDs include Tryps, ARBO – 3 day stiff sickness, Blue tongue, RVF

# Response to JD and other TBDs

- Intensive cattle dipping

Weekly cattle dipping and the 5-5-4 day dipping interval in outbreak areas

- Blitz Presidential tick grease programme

Tick grease application to complement dipping programme. Recent evaluation by World bank has noted the effectiveness of the intervention

- National dip tank rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of the national dipping infrastructure key in the fight against TBDs. A total of **947 dip tanks** have been rehabilitated in the last two years

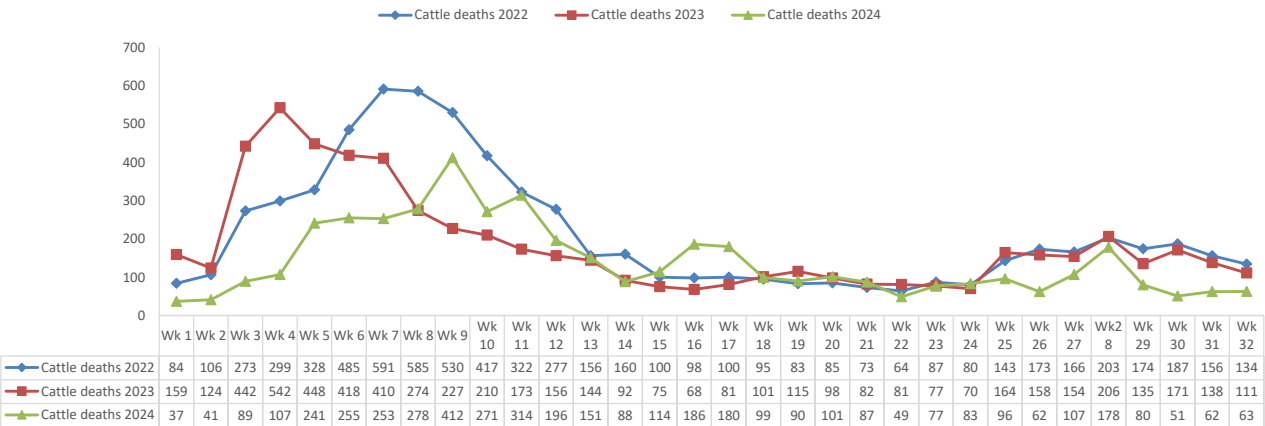
- Tick-borne diseases vaccine production

Babesiosis and Anaplasmosis already in production with DVS working to promote uptake. Theileriosis (BOLVAC) vaccine still undergoing field trials

\*With the exception for JD ‘hotspots’ that are dipping weekly, the rest of the country is dipping fortnightly. Pour-on acaricide has been supplied to areas facing water challenges in order to maintain the dipping program.

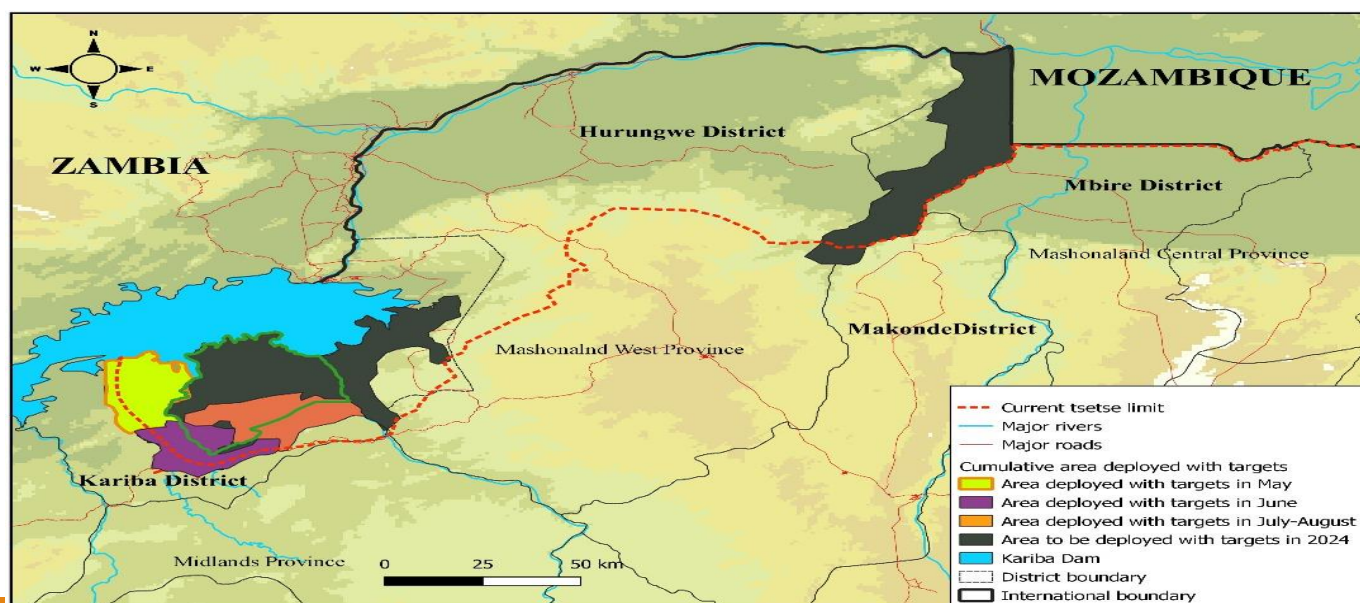
## Impact of control measures

TBD MORTALITIES TRENDS 2022-2024



Cumulative tick-borne disease mortalities showing a gradual declining trend from 2022 to 2024.

# Tsetse Control Zone and 2024 targets



## Transboundary and Priority Diseases

# Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)

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Country experiences sporadic outbreaks of the disease from the traditional **FMD SAT 1,2 & 3**.

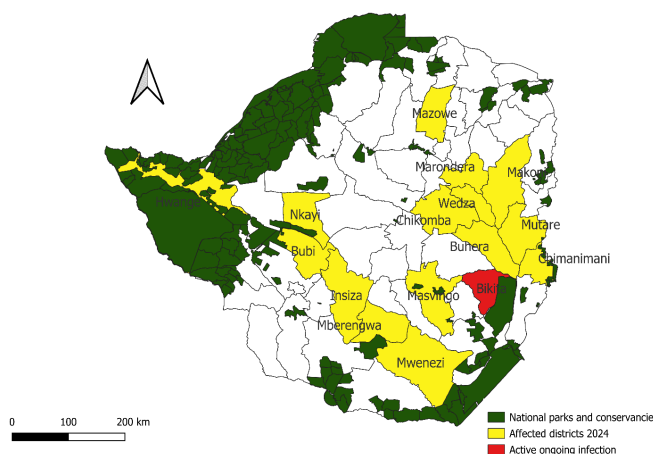
Buffalo-cattle interactions major source of outbreaks with spread fuelled by illegal cattle movements (transboundary and internal).

Threat of exotic and more severe **FMD serotype O** remains, especially from Mozambique which we share 43% of our boundary with.

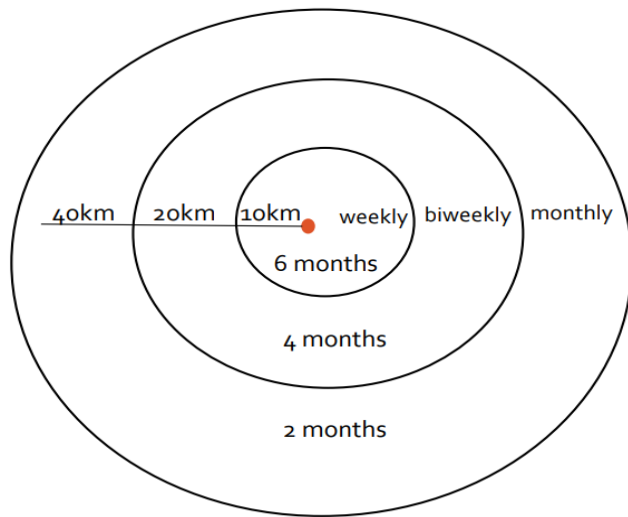
To date 1 025 037 cattle have been vaccinated against FMD surpassing the 989 200 annual target

## Current FMD situation in the country

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# FMD Control Protocol



- In the event of FMD outbreaks quarantine orders are issued swiftly to contain spread, however the lifting of these quarantines have been most often delayed.
- Prolonged quarantine periods are not only stifling the industry but are also a major driver for illegal movement of livestock.

## FMD control efforts

- Control and prophylactic vaccinations, total 1 030 356, having surpassed the annual target of 989 200
- Animal movement quarantines enforced by veterinary checkpoints
- Re-establishment of the FMD game fence
- Surveillance and extensive farmer trainings



# Anthrax and Rabies

Disease	Cumulative number of animals vaccinated in 2024	Annual target for animal vaccinations
Rabies	356 316	440 000
Anthrax	647 554	721 900

## Blackleg

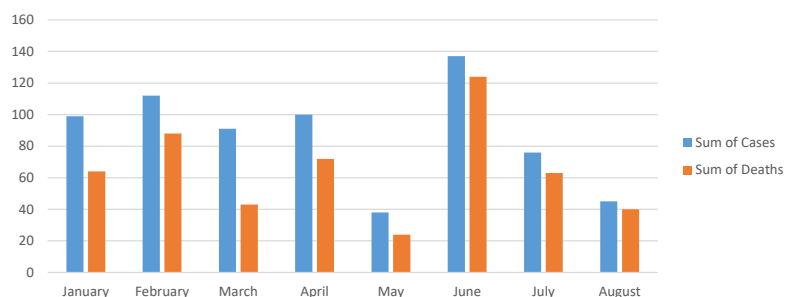
Disease most prevalent in the southern provinces (**esp. Mat South**) which represent more than 50% of recorded cases each year.

- In 2022; **981 deaths** compared with 698 deaths for the same period this year

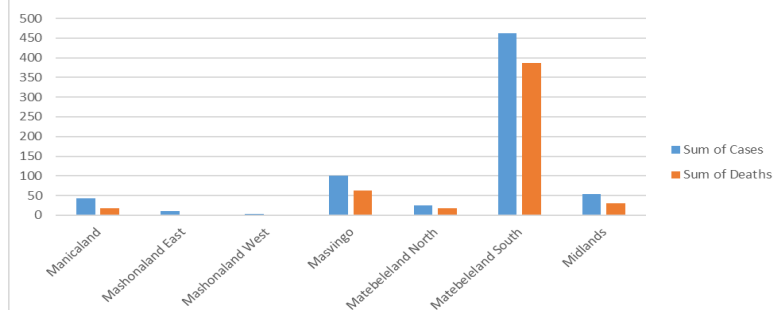
- Farmers advised to vaccinate their cattle annually to prevent losses.

DVS considering procurement of blanthrax vaccine instead of anthrax alone for its mandatory anthrax vaccinations.

Blackleg cases for the period Jan-Aug 2023



Blackleg cases and deaths Jan to August 2023





# Drought situation and mitigatory measures

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CLAFA 2 highlighted the worst El Nino-induced drought in 40 yrs with the following forecast

- 47% of the rural wards will face critical grazing shortage from July while 12% have adequate grazing
- Only 24% of the wards will have enough water to last until the next season

With regards to productivity

- the national beef herd increased by 1.3%, from 5,642,400 cattle in 2022 to 5,718,523 cattle in 2023.
- the breeding herd was not in full production. The country is losing, potentially some 500,000 calves annually due to low calving rates which translates to USD 100-250 million annually.
- there was a 2% increase in the national average off-take of beef cattle from 8% in 2022 to 10% in 2023.
- in 2023 the national calving rate averaged 42% remaining unchanged from 2022.
- National cattle mortality decreased from 6% in 2022 to 4.6% in 2023.
- The average beef carcass weight for 2023 was 182kg up from 180kg in 2022.

## Drought situation and mitigatory measures cont. 2

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This culminated in the declaration of a National State of Disaster in April 2024 by HE and call for action with The livestock drought response strategy completed by August 2024.

-This is part of Government commitment to mitigate the impact of the drought and enhance resilience in communities and ensure sustainable livestock production.

- The interventions underpinning the strategy include supplementary feeding programme, water supply initiatives, veterinary services and capacity building through training. The interventions are targeted at ward level where a Ward Drought Mitigation Centre is being established.
- A Drought Mitigation Command Centre was established to implement this strategy. The Command centre is supported by provincial and district structures, 1 620 Ward Drought Mitigation Focal Persons and Ward Veterinary Services Officers.

# Drought situation and mitigatory measures cont. 3

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- Components of The Ward Drought Mitigation Centre consists of the Village Business Unit Model Livestock Center where there is establishment of a 1 horticulture garden, 2 fishponds, 1 solarized borehole, drinking/feed troughs, spray race and holding/sale pen.
- Government have secured some 15 000MT of silage, molasses, and 8 800MT of maize unfit for human consumption. An estimated 15 million bales (12kgs each) are expected from 2024 winter wheat season.
- Standard Operating Procedures have been developed to guide operations at the Ward Drought Mitigation Centres. In addition, a Drought Mitigation Tracking and Programming tool has been established to monitor and evaluate efforts.

## Summary of mitigatory measures

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### \*Interventions include;

1. Structured destocking
2. Relocation of animals for relief grazing (*taking in consideration FMD status*)
3. Vaccination against soil-borne disease
4. Veld management
5. Provision of supplementary feed and water
6. Livestock identification- Cumulative number of branded cattle to 2 600 582 which is above the revised annual target of 2 million.

# Acknowledgements

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