Secure Sheep and Wool Supply Plan – What Producers Need to Know

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Swine producers are nervously watching outbreaks of African Swine Fever (ASF) happening around the world. There is a disease just as devastating that can impact sheep and it is called foot and mouth disease (FMD).

Luckily, the United States has not had a case of FMD since 1929. However, with global travel and trade, the risk of FMD introduction exists. To help producers protect their flocks, the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) has funded development of the [Secure Sheep and Wool Supply (SSWS) Plan](https://securesheepwool.org/Assets/Secure-Sheep-and-Wool-Supply-Plan-for-Continuity-of-Business.pdf) ([securesheepwool.org](https://securesheepwool.org/)) to help producers protect their flocks from FMD. Recently, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) partnered with the ASI to fund outreach materials and efforts to increase FMD awareness of producers.

# What Does FMD Look Like?

Adult sheep infected with FMD often show **no, or only mild signs of infection**, but they can still spread the disease. FMD causes blisters on the feet and in the mouth of cattle, pigs, and sometimes in sheep and goats. FMD is a very contagious animal disease. Signs of FMD in adult sheep can be easily confused with other common diseases. Young lambs with FMD are much more likely to die. FMD does NOT affect people or food safety. Meat and milk are safe to eat.

# Preventing FMD Spread

Controlling the spread of FMD involves stopping movement of animals and animal products (raw wool, semen, embryos, and manure). At the beginning of an FMD outbreak, the USDA is recommending a 72-hour national movement standstill for all cloven-hoofed livestock and their products. After this time, movement controls will continue in the areas around infected animals, throughout a state, or even a region. Restarting movement will require a special permit, issued by Regulatory Officials, after a producer meets certain requirements. The SSWS Plan gives guidance for producers who have sheep with no evidence of FMD infection to meet movement permit requirements. securesheepwool.org/producers/permit-guidance/.

# Secure Sheep and Wool Supply (SSWS) Plan

The SSWS Plan supports FMD control for infected farms and business continuity for uninfected farms. Resources are provided to help producers prepare BEFORE an FMD outbreak. Following the guidance will help producers with sheep that have no evidence of infection limit disease exposure, move animals under a movement permit and maintain business continuity. Producers can prepare now by:

* Having a National Premises Identification Number (PIN: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/traceability/state-pin>.
* Writing an operation-specific enhanced biosecurity plan
* Keeping movement records of animals, people, equipment, and other items onto your operation
* Developing contingency plans for their operation in the case of limited movement
* Reviewing the Wool Handling and Movement guidance on the SSWS website

# Disease Monitoring

To limit disease spread during an FMD outbreak, sheep should be looked at often. Producers should report suspicious signs of disease to their flock veterinarian or State or Federal Animal Health Official.

# Next Steps

Explore the resources available to help you protect your animals and business available at [securesheepwool.org](http://securesheepwool.org) and [www.aphis.usda.gov/fadprep](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/fadprep).