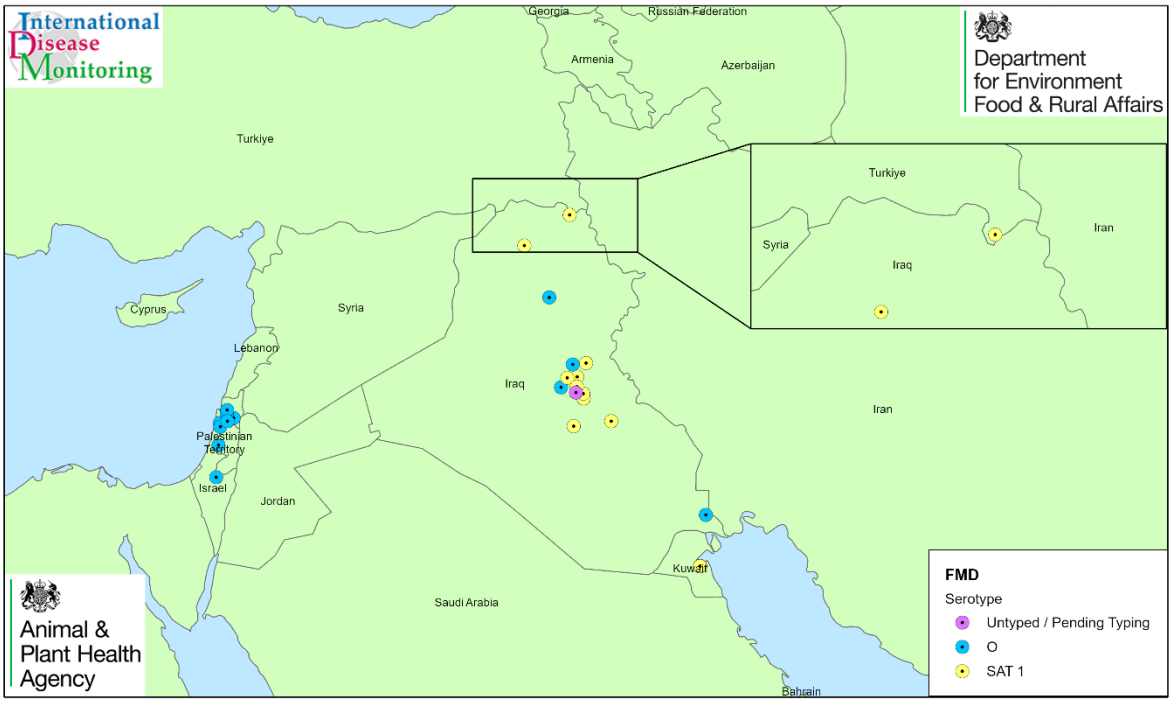
Preliminary Outbreak Assessment

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) SAT1 in Türkiye

15 May 2025

Disease report

Following the recent outbreaks of foot and mouth disease (FMD) caused by serotype SAT1 in Bahrain, Iraq and Kuwait, the disease has now been detected in Türkiye. The report WAHIS was near the Iraqi border. The SAT1 serotype has not been detected in Türkiye since 1965.



Map Prepared by IDM

Date: 16/05/2025

Absolute Scale: 1:12,000,000

Foot and Mouth Disease
01 January to 15 May 2025
(WOAH Data Only)

0 225 450 675 Km

Situation assessment

On 12 May 2025, Türkiye reported detection of foot and mouth disease virus (FMDV), SAT1 serotype. The outbreak occurred in cattle in a village across several farms. The cases were identified during the spring vaccination campaign due to clinical signs observed, including salivation and vesicles in the mouth and nose of the animals on 30 April 2025 (WOAH). Samples were taken the same day, though the disease was confirmed clinically, and was reported to WOAH after being typed as SAT1 on 12 May.

The cases occurred in the Hacıbey-Başaklı village, approximately 2km away from the Iraqi border. Iraq has also recently reported cases of SAT1 FMDV in the country (Foot and Mouth Disease SAT1 in Iraq, Bahrain and Kuwait). The closest reported outbreak in Iraq, in the Ninawa region, is about 130km from the outbreak in Türkiye.

Windborne incursion is being considered as a likely source of infection, given recent stormy conditions in the area, and there are villages close to the border in Iraq. Though illegal animal movements are also being investigated (WOAH).

The FMD serotype O is endemic in the region and outbreaks due to serotype SAT2 that entered these countries in 2022/3 continue to be reported. Outbreaks related to these serotypes were last reported in April 2025, with 68 serotype O outbreaks and 25 SAT2 outbreaks. Türkiye has also reported 3 outbreaks of FMD serotype A, with the last reported 18 February 2025 and 15 outbreaks where the serotype is pending or untypeable (ADIS summaries).. The last occurrence of SAT1 FMDV in Türkiye was in 1965 (WRLFMD). The introduction of the new serotype means there is a risk of rapid dissemination of the virus in the area. Current control measures that have been introduced include disinfection, movement control, quarantine, screening, traceability and surveillance within the restricted zone. Vaccination will likely be applied in response to the outbreak (WOAH).

Impact for Great Britain

FMD is a highly contagious viral disease of cattle, sheep, pigs and other cloven-hoofed animals. It causes very significant economic losses, due to production losses in the affected animals and due to the loss of access to foreign markets for animals, meat and milk for affected countries. FMD does not infect humans and does not pose a food safety risk. While death rates in susceptible species are typically low, the disease can make animals ill with fever, decreased appetite, excessive drooling, blisters, decreased production, and other signs.

The virus spreads easily through contact and airborne transmission and can quickly infect entire herds. People can facilitate the spread of the virus through fomites via farming equipment, bedding, shoes, clothing and vehicle tyres that have come into contact with the virus.

Conclusion

For the first time since 1965, SAT1 FMD has been reported in Türkiye, following its recent occurrence in Bahrain, Iraq and Kuwait. The FAO have alerted countries in the Near East and Western Eurasia regions to be on high alert as the SAT1 serotype is not usually present in these regions, making livestock populations highly susceptible to the disease. Due to the absence of natural or vaccine-induced immunity in these animals, the disease has potential to spread quickly across borders and regions, causing significant damage to agriculture and the economy.

While these detections of FMDV SAT1 represent a continual spread of new serotypes of FMDV to new regions within the Middle East, it presents a low risk to Great Britain. There is no trade to Great Britain in live animals or animal products from countries in the region. FMDV (serotype O) has been reported in Europe for the first time in more than 10 years. These outbreaks in Europe present a higher immediate risk of entry of FMDV into Great Britain than the outbreaks described here in the Middle East. The risk that FMDV will enter Great Britain from Europe over the next 3 months (from 3 April 2025) has recently been assessed as medium (Foot and mouth disease in Hungary and Slovakia - GOV.UK). The highest risk routes of FMDV from Europe entering Great Britain are through commercial, personal or illegal trade of products of animal origin (POAO). Each of these routes had a medium risk (meaning that the virus is expected to enter Great Britain ‘regularly’ over the next 3 months through each of the commercial, personal and illegal trade routes). We consider at present there to be no change in the risk of incursion of FMD to Great Britain from the outbreaks of FMDV-SAT1 in Iraq and consider an overall medium risk of introduction of disease from any affected region in the world including Europe. The risk from illegal imports is difficult to quantify but travellers from the Middle East and other third country areas who bring meat or dairy products can face prosecution and a large fine.

We will continue to monitor the situation and remind livestock keepers of the importance of maintaining strict on-farm biosecurity, compliance with the swill feeding ban, and the reporting of all suspicions of notifiable disease promptly. Swill feeding any animal, whether pigs, poultry, ruminants, or wildlife is illegal and has the potential to cause substantial harm. We would like to emphasise to all keepers of livestock, including smallholders, and the general public to ensure that livestock are not fed catering waste, kitchen scraps or products of animal origin, thereby observing the swill feeding ban. All keepers of livestock, whether commercial holdings or not, should remain vigilant, as with all biosecurity, these measures are only as effective as the people using them, so proper training should be provided.

For more information on the situation in Europe, see our most recent update. We will continue to monitor the situation.

Authors

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References

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2025). https://www.fao.org/animal-health/news-events/events/detail/fmd-serotype-sat1-alert/en (Accessed 15 May 2025).

This publication is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/animal-diseases-international-monitoring

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