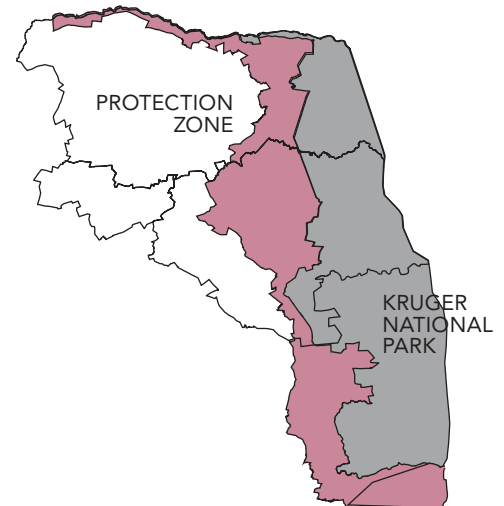
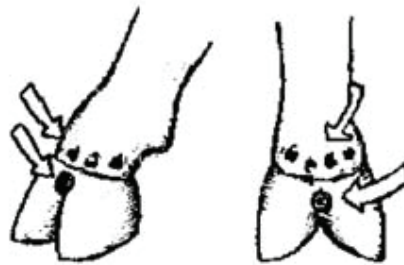
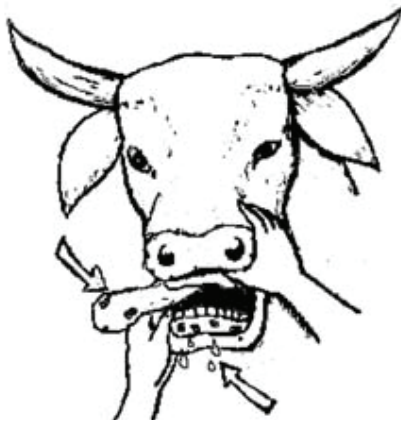




KNOW THE SIGNS OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

WHAT IS IT?

Foot-and-mouth disease is a serious viral infection that spreads easily. The virus is found in all body fluids, such as saliva, urine, faeces, and milk, and also survives in air. As such, it is exhaled by all diseased animals.



WHEN DO ANIMALS CONTRACT IT?

Animals contract the disease when they consume infected bodily fluids, or when they breathe in the virus.

People can also transmit the virus through unwashed clothes, shoes, hands and car tyres on which the virus is present.

Cattle are mainly affected, but pigs, goats, sheep and other cloven-hooved animals, including wildlife, can also contract the disease.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

Infected animals usually present with blisters and sores on the gums, lips and tongue. These sores are raw and painful, thus making it difficult for the animal to eat, and often causes drooling. Animals may also have blisters and sores between their toes and where their hooves join the skin. These may cause lameness. Some animals may even lose their claws or hooves.

Cows may also develop sores on their teats. This often results in a sudden drop in milk production.

HOW IS IT BEING PREVENTED?

In South Africa, buffalo in the Kruger National Park are asymptomatic. This means that they have the disease, but show no symptoms. Sometimes cattle around the park may contract the disease from buffalo that escape. To stop the disease from spreading, the area around the park is thus fenced off to separate these cattle from the rest of the country. This area is called the Protection Zone. All cattle in this area are inspected and some are vaccinated to protect the animals and prevent its spread.