

No system. According to the authorities, lack of a monitoring system makes it hard for them to track the animals.

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NAKASONGOLA. Authorities in Nakasongola District have admitted failure in the management and control of the foot and mouth disease (FMD) as some farmers smuggle animals out of from quarantined areas.

Mr Jacob Nabimanya, a livestock farmer, owning about 78 head of cattle in Nabiswera Sub-county, in a recent interview with *Daily Monitor* said, the quarantine period which is not specified has encouraged animal smuggling in the area.

"Some of our colleagues are selling their animals to traders cheaply without authorisation from the veterinary officers. We have information that they are doing so under the guise of getting school fees for their children," Mr Nabimanya said.

The Resident District Commissioner, Mr Dan Muganga, blamed the problem on government's delay to dispatch vaccines for FMD.

"We have quarantine in place, but the delay in delivering the vaccines is prolonging the fight against FMD in Nakasongola. My office has information that some farmers have tactfully decided not to report the disease to concerned authorities. We need to handle this problem," Mr Muganga told the district council recently.

Commenting about the illegal practice, the district production officer, Mr

Farmers smuggle animals out of quarantined areas



Banned. Traders load cattle on a lorry at Ngoma Cattle Market in Nakaseke District. Authorities have imposed a cattle movement ban due to an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the area. PHOTO BY DAN WANDERA

Gerald Kitaka, said: "We cannot rule out the possibility of animals being smuggled out from the quarantined areas. It is difficult to estimate the number of animals smuggled out since we do not have a monitoring system in place to detect their movement."

He added: "However, we have established cattle loading areas to allow some of the animals which are

disease free to go to the market. What we closed are all the cattle markets in all the Sub-counties in Nakasongola District".

The district chairperson, Mr Sam Kigula, appealed to authorities to expedite the procurement process arguing that the livestock industry contributes a big percentage to the district revenue and more than 60

per cent of the residents derive a livelihood from livestock farming.

"We have been promised that the vaccines will soon be in. The problem of animals being smuggled out of the quarantined areas is complex since we do not have the data about them," he said.

Dr Sam Eswagu, the district veterinary officer, said procuring vaccines is a process since they have to be procured from areas outside Uganda.

"We submitted our requisition to the ministry of Agriculture and we were informed that the vaccines would be procured from Botswana for this particular FMD outbreak. This is what we are waiting for," Mr Eswagu said adding that "We have so far lost at least 10 animals but the risk of the disease spreading is high."

Cattle trade

Nakasongola District has an estimated 268,000 head of cattle and more than 1,000 animals are transported out of the district to different market areas daily.