

Govt runs out of animal vaccines

Shortage. Stock-out attributed to the mass vaccination exercise launched recently.

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GULU. Government has run out of vaccines for treating foot and mouth disease, State minister for Agriculture Vincent Sempijja has revealed.

According to Mr Sempijja, the stock out is due to the mass vaccination exercise government launched recently as it moves to curb the spread of the contagious animal disease.

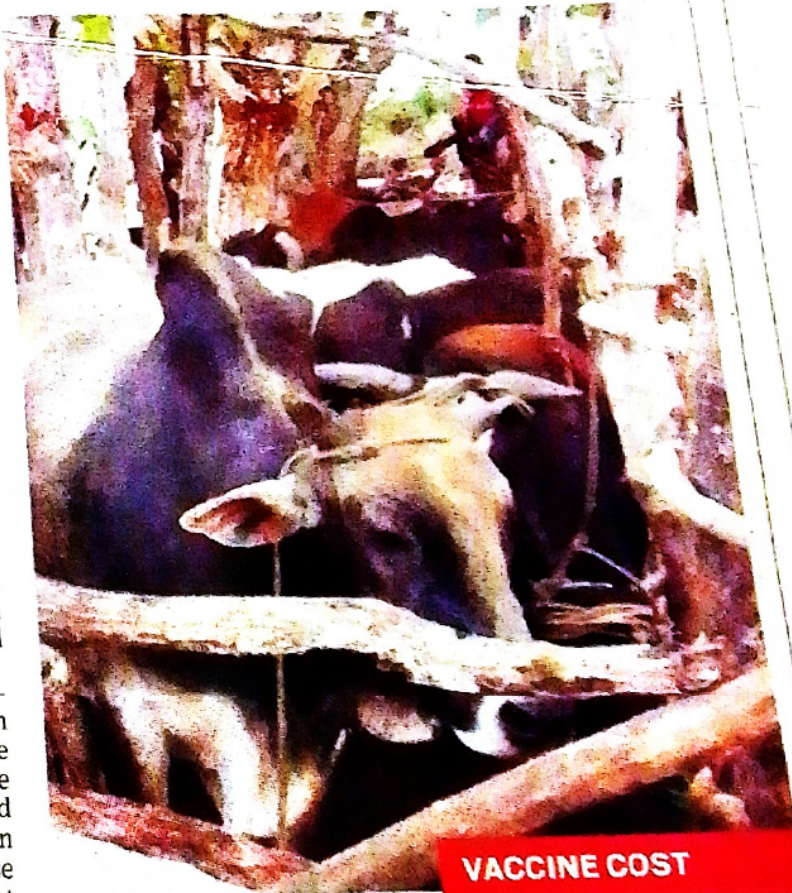
Foot and mouth disease is an infectious and sometimes fatal viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals such as goats, cows, sheep and pigs.

"We have been carrying out mass vaccination in the country; that's why we run out of the vaccines. The stock available is in the field in various districts to help in the treatment of the disease and, therefore, we cannot get to treat animals in other districts," Mr Sempijja said.

The minister made the disclosure last Friday during a consultative meeting with pastoralists commonly known as Balaalo and district security committees from Acholi Sub-region at Gulu District headquarters.

The meeting was convened to discuss progress of the implementation of President Museveni's directive to have illegal nomadic pastoralists evicted from Acholi following rampant land conflicts arising from their presence.

The leaders during a regional security meeting held last month also resolved that animals be first vaccinated



VACCINE COST

Prevention. Cattle being vaccinated in Nakapiripirit District last year. PHOTO STEVEN ARIONG

before the pastoralists leave to avoid spreading or contracting animal diseases in areas they will go to.

Although Mr Sempijja said government will foot the expenses of vaccinating all the animals belonging to the Balaalo and other farmers in the region, he said the process will come later since they have no vaccines.

He said government is in the process of importing the vaccines.

The minister also gave the pastoralists until end of

Government requires more than Shs8.4 billion per year to vaccinate about 14 million cattle in the country. Acholi alone has about 160,000 herds of cattle.

March to leave the sub-region after all their animals have been vaccinated.

"We are not going to extend our eviction ultimatum after March, but I want to caution these pastoralists to desist from nomadism... they should practice modern agriculture wherever they are going so that they develop," he said.



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