

...over the years, it was

"The same spirit of transparency and reorganise the compensation plan to education, promote

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KIGEZI. The authorities in the districts of Kabale and Rubanda in Kigezi Sub-region have embarked on a vaccination exercise to save goats and sheep from contracting the deadly Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) disease.

The PPR disease, commonly known as goat plague, is a highly contagious and viral disease among ruminants.

It was confirmed in the districts of Kabale and Rubanda about two months ago.

Livestock farmers said the infected animals present symptoms such as breathing complications, persistent cough and high fever, nasal discharge and loss of appetite, running stomach and diarrhoea before they die.

The Kabale District veterinary officer, Dr Angella Anyongyeire, on Tuesday said: "Our teams are on the ground carrying out vaccination exercise and radio announcements have been made detailing the dates and venue."

The assistant veterinary officer-in-charge of Kyanamira Sub-county in Kabale, Mr Barnette Tayebwa, on Tuesday decried low uptake of the vaccine by livestock farmers.

Govt vaccinates Kigezi goats, sheep against plague



A veterinary officer (centre) vaccinates goats in Katokye Parish, Kabale District, on Tuesday. PHOTO/ ROBERT MUHEREZA

Some farmers said the exercise should be free, complaining about veterinary officers asking them to buy stationery, photocopy documents, and other

things.

Mr Tayebwa explained that the vaccination exercise targets the uninfected goats and sheep.

He advised the farmers whose animals have already contracted the disease to treat them.

The Katokye Parish chairperson, Mr Benjamin Atukunda, said the PPR disease has claimed more than 200 goats and sheep in his area and encouraged farmers to embrace the ongoing vaccination exercise.

"The fee of Shs2,000 charged per goat or sheep is not so much compared to the loss of a goat that currently costs between Shs200,000 and Shs300,000 depending on the size. Sometime back, this disease killed many goats and sheep in this area and if the livestock farmers had embraced vaccination, this disease could not have reoccurred," Mr Atukunda said.

The Rubanda District Veterinary Officer, Dr Dismus Baterana, said they have received about 15,000 PPR vaccine

dozes ahead of the exercise that will begin next week.

"Because the PPR disease is now endemic in Kigezi as it rotates from one district to another, vaccinating the uninfected goats and sheep is our main target. PPR disease is a viral infection that spreads when an uninfected animal gets in contact with the infected one," Dr Baterana said.

Mr Leo Tumwikirize, a resident of Kasiru Village in Kabale District, said all his nine goats, a source of livelihood, succumbed to the disease.

Mr Jackson Nasiima, the chairperson of the Kabale District Meat and Cattle Traders' Association, said the disease outbreak could be responsible for the scarcity of goats and sheep in both the rural and urban markets.

"The number of goats and sheep slaughtered at the Kabale main abattoir has reduced from 30 to 15 per day since the beginning of this year and we suspect that this disease outbreak could be responsible for this decline. If the scarcity of these animals continues, it may result in the increased price of meat," he said.

Shs2,000
CHARGED
PER ANIMAL