



2026

DISEASE REPORT

FEBRUARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

February
2026

During February, the incidence of livestock diseases was still dominated by the continued incidence of foot-and-mouth disease, and the start of the vaccination campaign with the first vaccines received.

Furthermore, climatic factors, especially the continued and high rainfall, drove the disease trends.

Internal parasites, especially wire worm in sheep and liver fluke caused losses and it is predicted that liver fluke and then conical stomach fluke cases will increase in the next 2 to 3 months in the specific areas where they do occur.

The insect-borne diseases also caused major problems with outbreaks of lumpy skin disease that occurred and to a lesser extent three-day stiff-sickness in cattle and bluetongue in sheep, which did pose a major challenge in specific areas.

The single case of Rift Valley Fever that occurred in the Northern Cape at the end of last year fortunately did not spread further and this offers producers this winter the opportunity, to get vaccinations up to date.



TOP 10 BEEF DISEASES

		Previous Month January 2026		Current Month February 2026	
Rank	Disease	Reports	Severity (3)	Reports	Severity (3)
1	Lumpy skin disease	61	3.0	56	▼2.8
2	Asiatic redwater	33	1.8	34	▲2.1
3	Blue ticks	31	2.1	28	▼1.9
4	African redwater	30	1.7	27	▼1.6
5	Eye infections	25	1.5	28	▲1.6
6	Heartwater	-	-	23	1.6
7	Dystocia (difficult birth)	30	1.5	28	▼1.4
8	Anaplasmosis	21	1.1	20	▲1.2
9	Lameness/foot problems	25	1.3	20	▼1.2
10	Warts	-	-	18	1.1

TOP 10 SHEEP DISEASES

		Previous Month January 2026		Current Month February 2026	
Rank	Disease	Reports	Severity (3)	Reports	Severity (3)
1	Wireworm	42	2.4	39	▲2.5
2	Blue tongue	21	1.1	23	▲1.4
3	Roundworms in general	24	1.5	21	▼1.2
4	Resistant round worms			14	1.1
5	Pulpy kidney	13	0.9	11	0.9
6	Lameness/foot problems	-	-	11	0.9
7	Eye infections	13	0.9	9	▼0.7
8	Coccidiosis	17	1.0	12	▼0.7
9	Tapeworm	15	0.9	9	▼0.5
10	Lung infections	-	-	4	0.4



FEBRUARY 2026

BEEF DISEASES

01 LUMPY SKIN DISEASE

SHEEP DISEASES

01 WIREWORM

02 BLUE TONGUE

February 2026

LUMPY SKIN DISEASE

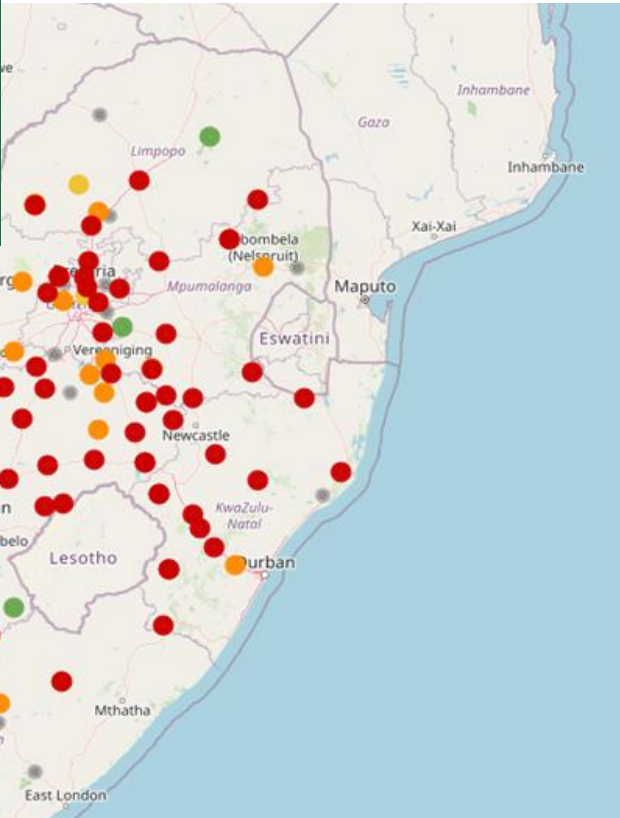
Previous Month January 2026		Current Month: February 2026	
Reports	Severity	Reports	Severity
61	3.0	56	▼2.8

There is no primary treatment for Lumpy Skin Disease. Treatments are supportive or designed to reduce secondary bacterial infections of the wounds formed when the lumps burst open. There is a highly effective vaccine that should be included in vaccination plans for all affected areas.

While mortalities (deaths) are low, there is a high infection rate (morbidity) in unvaccinated animals and significant unrecoverable economic losses, such as infertility in infected bulls. A Disease Warning was issued in October last year due to the trend that was picked up at the end of winter, when several cases were reported, which is very untypical for the winter season when the disease normally don't occur.

FARMER ACTION

Many farmers didn't vaccinate before the start of the wet season, and as expected, there were large outbreaks as reported by the veterinarians. Vaccinations proved to be protective during this season if it was done before the start of the wet season.



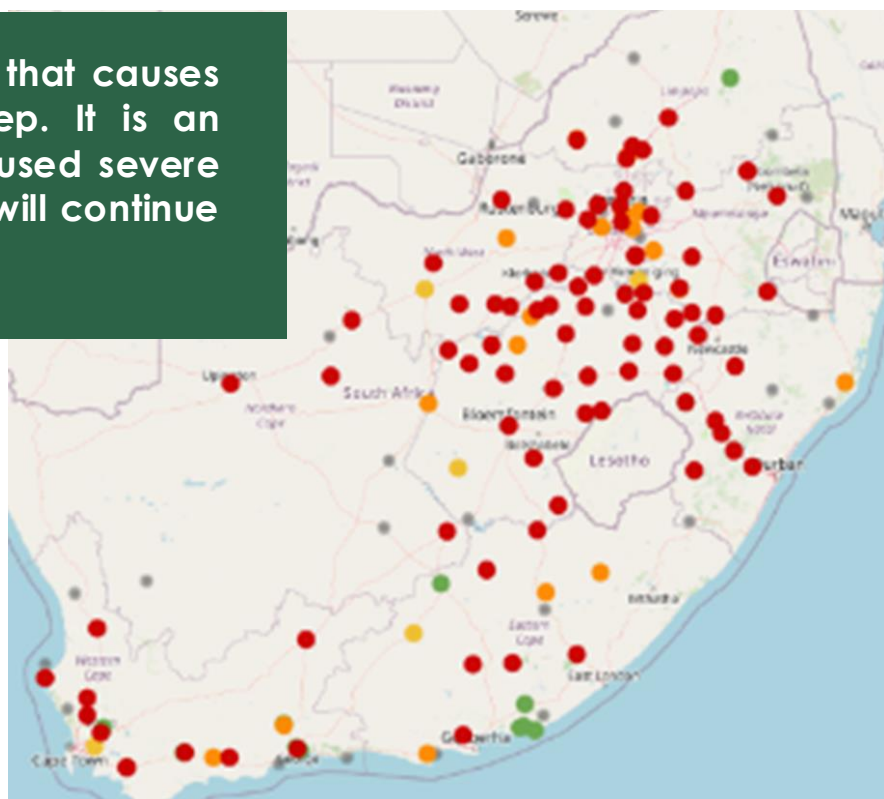
February 2026

WIREWORM IN SHEEP

Previous Month January 2026		Current Month: February 2026	
Reports	Severity	Reports	Severity
42	2.4	39	▲2.5

Wireworm is the internal parasite that causes most losses and deaths in sheep. It is an ongoing challenge, but it has caused severe losses during this summer, which will continue into the autumn.

Conditions for the multiplication and transmission of wireworm were totally favourable for this parasite (warm temperature and rainfall above 25mm per month) during February.

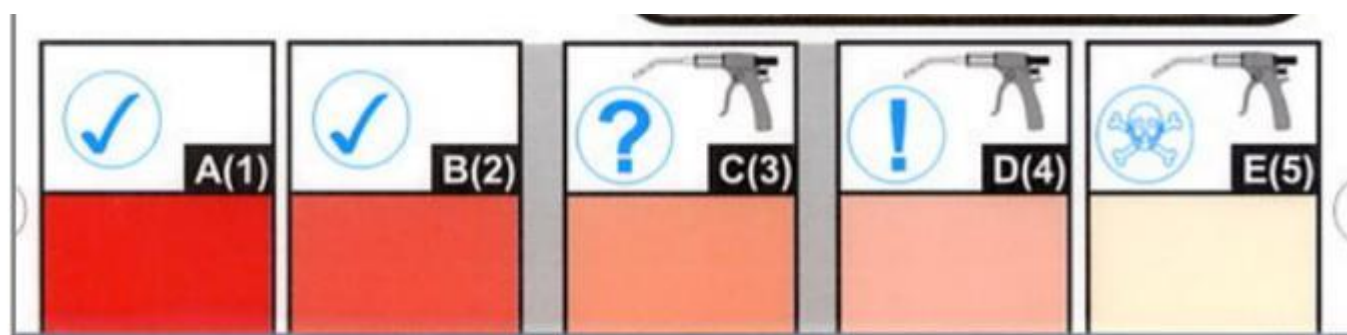


FARMER ACTION

Use the **FAMACHA** system to check the inside eyelid of sheep to identify anaemia early and treat against wireworm as needed.

Consult with your local veterinarian and implement a monitoring system (worm egg counting) and tactical treatment as indicated.

Also use the **FAMACHA** system to check the inside eyelid of sheep to identify anaemia early and treat against wireworm as needed.



February 2026

BLUE TONGUE IN SHEEP

Previous Month January 2026		Current Month: February 2026	
Reports	Severity	Reports	Severity
21	1.1	23	▲ 1.4

Although blue tongue was still ranked as the number 2 disease reported for sheep in February the outbreaks up to now are less than the previous rainy season due to flock immunity that developed during the severe outbreaks last year.

It stay important to vaccinate all replacement ewes and young rams with the live vaccine and follow adult animals yearly up with the live or inactivated vaccine.

If the inactivated vaccine is used in young animals it must be boosted within a month after the first vaccination.

FEVER + MOUTH AND FEET LESIONS



DISEASE OUTLOOK

We end off with an outlook for March 2026.

Wireworm infestations in sheep are expected to remain high and will continue to cause significant losses. In addition, the many waterlogged areas are creating favourable conditions for the transmission of liver fluke and conical or stomach fluke, and these risks are expected to remain elevated during March.

Tick pressure is expected to remain high under current wet conditions, with associated risk of tick-borne diseases continuing across affected areas.

Due to the ongoing wet conditions, insect-transmitted diseases such as lumpy skin disease in cattle and bluetongue in sheep are expected to remain at high levels during March.

Foot and mouth disease remains the dominant concern. With additional vaccines becoming available, farmers are urged to apply for preventative vaccination through their private veterinarians, who will submit applications to the state veterinarian.

