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THE OIE/FAO FMD REFERENCE LABORATORY NETWORK

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The Network of OIE/FAO Foot and mouth disease (FMD) Reference Laboratories brings together representatives from ten countries giving a good global coverage and including both FMD-free and FMD-affected regions.

The participants meet annually and also produce an annual report of their activities for OIE and FAO. One task is to collate and analyse information on the diversity and distribution of strains of FMD viruses (FMDV) that are currently circulating. This information needs to be integrated with disease incidence data and intelligence on animal movements and trade in order to make predictions on the regional risks for new epidemics. A second task is to provide information on the potential suitability of vaccine strains against current and emerging threats. Once again the laboratory data should be complemented by evidence on vaccine efficacy from the field along with details from manufacturers about the availability of vaccines incorporating different viral strains. A third task is to improve the capability of laboratories to support regional control programmes and this includes both laboratories of the Network members themselves, as well as their region's National Laboratories.

Priorities and approaches for this work will be discussed.



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