

*Subject:* Reference number: DG(SANCO)/2014-7089

FVO audit in Swaziland from 28 January 2014 to 04 February 2014 in order to evaluate the animal health control system in place, in particular in relation to controls on foot-and-mouth disease

Receipt of the FVO audit draft report reference number: DG(SANCO)/ 2014-7089-MR, is acknowledged. This joint audit, with DG(SANCO)/ 2014-7245, was indeed carried out in a professional manner.

The report is an accurate record or reflection of the situation as it was on the ground during the audit. Representatives of the Competent Authority accompanied the Inspectors and were party to their discoveries, which were in all circumstances explained to them. Also at the final meeting with CCA both strengths and deficiencies in respect of the standards applied were discussed.

Since the joint Audit, a number of improvements have been implemented, according to the discussions and advice from the Inspectors; CCA issued a directive on Veterinary Controls on Swazi Cattle Repatriated from Neighbouring Territories, classifying such animals as imports and prescribing how they should be identified and managed. Also under a Public- Private- Partnership, CCA is now assured of emergency funding for FMD laboratory testing by external laboratories. Applications for the 'J' approval of the Cattle Assembly Centre and for the classification of the Lubombo Protection Zone (LPZ) as 'SZ-3' and its approval as another catchment area for EU beef exports have since been sent to the European Union. Details on these changes referred to are in the attached matrix and annexes.

Swaziland remain committed to the implementation of OIE International Standards on Animal Health and maintenance of the *'FMD free, where vaccination is not practiced'* status. The country is also committed to the implementation of European Union Legislation, with regards to beef exports from third countries, to safeguard the export market for the benefit of all livestock farmers in the country including subsistence cattle farmers.

Further evaluation of the responses to DG(SANCO)/2014-7089-MR and/ or guidance on the way forward will be welcome.