

Colombia aims to be free from FMD by August.

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Mr. Andres Valencia, Minister of Agriculture of Colombia, announced during a press conference about the government's aim to regain the sanitary status on foot-and-mouth disease from vaccination within the next two months, which is the main task of the country's plan for 2019. In this regard, the Minister will attend the General Assembly of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), which will be held in Paris between 28 - 31 May this year, to report the progress of

the current situation about this disease in Colombia.

Minister Valencia said that Colombia wishes to report to Mrs. Monique Eliot, President of the Organization for Animal Health, during the General Assembly that will be held this month, about the progress of the disease eradication policy and dedication in efforts and resources of Colombia, so that the country can regain foot-and-mouth disease free status within August.

The Ministry of Agriculture of Colombia, together with the Colombian Agriculture and Livestock Institute (ICA), has implemented a vaccination program to prevent foot-and-mouth disease and brucellosis twice between the year 2018 and 2019. Early this year, in order to meet OIE requirements and to maintain high levels of disease prevention in cattle and buffaloes, a revaccination has been implemented.

This task is very important to Colombia. Because there is an urgent need to find a market that will open for importing this type of product. Last week the Peruvian government has announced a ban on imports of beef and pigs from Colombia for the consecutive year saying that there is an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the north of the Andina region.

As a result, the Minister intends to inform OIE about the policies of the local government in the region regarding the control of smuggling of this type of product. Although, he concerns about the situation in Venezuela that may affect many years of efforts to receive disease-free status of the entire continent.

The Colombian government has given priority to the establishment of prevention policies to reduce the damage that may occur from the outbreak of animal diseases. So, they have a plan to persuade OIE to establish an agreement, on an urgent need, for promoting health surveillances along the country's borders, preventing the entry of African Swine Fever in pigs, including surveillance and diagnosis in a and antimicrobial resistance.

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