

FMD news: a system for identification, capture and delivery of foot-and-mouth disease-related news items

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The FMD News is a web-based search service provided by the FMD Lab at the Center for Animal Disease Modeling and Surveillance at UC Davis. The objectives of the service are to identify, capture, organize, and deliver FMD-related news items for those interested in FMD. FMD News items represent official news releases from international organizations and national governments, and unofficial opinions, commentary, or reports posted by individuals or by the press. Web-searches are routinely performed in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, and Arabic languages. FMD News items captured through the web-searches are summarized in English and archived in a database that is publicly accessible via the FMD BioPortal system (<https://fmdbioportal.ucdavis.edu>). Subscribers to FMD News can receive FMD News items either in near real time (every few hours) or in daily or weekly digests. Since the inception of the FMD News in October 2004, 6,736 news items from 120 countries have been captured and delivered to 350 subscribers from 50 countries. FMD News items are organized to provide information about social and economic consequences of the disease, control-related activities, reports on suspected or confirmed FMD cases, and disease-related general information. Since October 2004, rumors or official reports of 155 FMD outbreaks were captured and delivered. The number of outbreaks reported by the FMD News in 2008 (n=27, 100%) was higher than the number reported by other information systems, such as ProMed (n=17, 63%) and the Office International des Epizooties (OIE, n="18," 67%). Considering only reports on outbreaks captured by the three information systems (n=13), outbreaks were reported by the FMD News, on average (median value), 50 (5) days earlier than ProMed and 14 (0) days earlier than OIE. Most of the outbreak reports were delivered by the FMD News system earlier than ProMed (n=9, 69.2%) and at the same day or earlier than the OIE (n=8, 61.5%). The FMD News system provides an informal global surveillance of FMD, by providing an opportunity for researchers, decision makers, and stakeholders to obtain a global situational awareness of FMD risk. Individuals interested in receiving the FMD News are invited to subscribe at no charge to at the webmaster at <http://fmd.ucdavis.edu/index.php?id=1>