



Ridding South Africa of brucellosis

Brucellosis can be eradicated from South Africa if government commits to tackling it.

Dr Johan Oosthuizen is a senior lecturer specialising in animal brucellosis at UNISA.

Risk factors associated with the occurrence of Brucella canis seropositivity in dogs within selected provinces of South Africa. Journal of SAVA. AOSIS

Brucellosis is a highly contagious disease caused by ingestion of unpasteurised milk or undercooked meat from infected animals. While the disease has been eradicated in many countries, South Africa has unsuccessfully been attempting to eradicate it since 1984.

Brucellosis affects people in different ways, and it can cause lifelong illness. People become infected by handling certain fluids from infected animals or drinking

their milk. In certain cases, mothers can also lose unborn children after being infected.

Pet and livestock owners and handlers, specifically, are concerned about the ongoing infection of their animals with this disease that can also make humans sick - especially if they trade in livestock products.

“They want assurance that their animals are safe to handle and safe to interact with, and that the products originating from their animals are

safe for human consumption,” says Dr Johan Oosthuizen.

Oosthuizen’s research involves establishing the prevalence of brucellosis within different animal species in South Africa in order to present a clear and realistic picture of the current situation to lawmakers.

“Government needs to accept responsibility for eradicating this controlled disease.”

Brucellosis can be eradicated from South Africa.

