

# RHD: Curbing the Spread:

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Now that demographics of indigenous, pet and farmed rabbits have been explained, we need to identify the measures taken. In South Africa no proper measures have been introduced from government, but around the world various countries have implemented measures to prevent and control its spread.

Measures needed and being implemented in South Africa include:

1. **Surveillance and Monitoring:** Regular monitoring of rabbit populations, especially in areas at risk, helps detect the presence of the virus early. Major role players in the industry has set aside their differences to start a monitoring and surveillance page, including Google maps, to properly log all confirmed and possible cases. A reporting and information site, [rhd.of-africa.com](http://rhd.of-africa.com) has been created with online forms, to assist in this as well as personal reports given to these role players, who has formed the RSA National Rabbit Council. The Council is seeking accreditation to keep on monitoring and to ensure that farmers and breeders are registered, in order to maintain proper control over the rabbit world. (See document regarding the different Industries).
2. **Legislation in the Pet Rabbit Industry** to prevent back yard breeding of pet owners who formed breeding mills after buying from pet shops, and the legislation preventing pet shops to sell rabbits. Refer to *Document The Feral Factor*, which is an absolute make or break to be able to curb RHD in South Africa. Pet Shops and Back Yard Pet breeders with no responsibility and ethics are pumping South Africa full of inbred, sick and weak rabbits, and these will be the ones getting dumped - spreading RHD (refer to Document Different Industries)
3. **Affordable Vaccination:** South Africa seriously needs a permit for an affordable batch vaccine in order to establish proper rabbit control and viability. Rabbit Farmers, Breeders and Rescues alike are in dire need, the farmers to ensure their breeding stock is protected, and rescues to help curb the disease and assist in the pet owner industry.
4. **Biosecurity Measures:** Implementing biosecurity measures on rabbit farms and in areas with a high risk of RHD can help prevent the introduction and spread of the virus.
5. **Quarantine Protocols:** Quarantine procedures for rabbits and rabbitries, farms and rescues after RHD outbreaks, Area outbreaks, entering the country or moving between regions should be enforced to prevent the spread of the virus.
6. **Education and Outreach:** Public awareness campaigns and educational programs aimed at rabbit owners, farmers, and the general public can promote understanding of RHD and encourage practices that minimize its risk. This has been successfully implemented by a group of role players to ensure the community is warned.
7. **Research and Diagnostics:** Ongoing research to understand the virus, its transmission, and potential vectors helps in developing effective diagnostic tools and strategies. This is currently being done by the RSA National Rabbit Council.
8. **Regulation of Rabbit Movement:** Regulating the importation of rabbits and rabbit-related products helps prevent the introduction of the virus from other regions. A permit and identification system is needed, as per the explanation in the *Industry Document*, to ensure that rabbits of various industries are marked and can be traced for disease control. During Surges (Late Autumn and the big surge during Spring, movement bans should be implemented for that time only, on affected areas, to curb the spread.