

A WORD FROM OSWALD

PRESIDENT: NGUNI CATTLE BREEDERS' SOCIETY



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**Necessary
information on
the disease**

**High
infectivity**

**Questions
and Answers**

**Spend more
time with your
cattle**

Good day fellow Nguni breeders,

The last few months had been difficult times for doing our passion and cattle business due to foot and mouth disease. Now it is not only the livestock farmer that is affected by this new invasion of a small virus in the whole world, the Covid-19 virus.

We have been through the phase of quarantine with our animals that we had to do with Foot-and-mouth disease, and now it is us, all citizens of this earth who are in quarantine.

I write this letter to you to give you the necessary information on the disease and a perspective on the impact and how we should plan our lives in the next few months or years. There is only one thing that is sure about the virus, and that is that we are unsure about its impact on our lives. As you read this information that I have given, it may already have changed.

If we take the spread of the virus in the last two weeks in South Africa and extrapolate it with an ideal spread of the virus, then the whole of South Africa will be infected within one month's time, which will **unlikely happen for many reasons, but this just gives us a picture of the high infectivity.**

I am not going to bore you with details of the virus itself, but try to answer a number of questions and put things into perspective.

Q: Why is the virus spreading so fast?

A: Because of its high infectivity, the long time it takes to be clinically visible, our present lifestyle which gives us physical contact with at least 10 people daily. That means a potential 10 people to be infected from one source daily.

Q: How to deal with my employees? Will they infect me?

A: You may be the covert culprit, or your wife, children, employees or your neighbour. It thus make no sense to treat anybody differently. Avoid handling your employees in one large group, and try to split them in small groups and keep them separated if possible, that if an infection happens, you don't temporarily lose all employees

Q: Will I be infected?

A: In all likelihood at some stage of the pandemic.

Q: How can I prevent from being infected at all?

A: You can isolate you and your family **permanently** from any contact with people, and everything any other person has touched. **It is virtually impossible.**

Q: Now why don't they then not just open the gates, let the disease run its course and get done with it?

A: There are good reasons to delay the onset.

1. To delay the onset is to spread the sick people over a longer period and make medical care if needed more accessible.
2. The chances are that an antiviral drug is developed and fast tracked that can treat the disease or reduce complications.
3. A vaccine may be developed to give immunity or partial immunity to the vaccinated.

Q: What are my chances of survival?

A: Everything is about statistics. We extrapolate what we know about the behaviour of the virus, to the South African scene. It may be better, it may be worse. With what we have at this stage the mortality rate is between 3 – 5%. That means more than 95% will survive. The scientists and epidemiologists are working on a number of "what if" mathematical models. It only means that they don't know what is going to happen in South Africa.

Q: Why did the government not do things much earlier?

A: We are no better or worse off than any other country in the world. Even at this stage there is not consensus among first world countries how to deal with this pandemic, simply because neither the scientists nor the politicians know exactly what they do is right. They have restricted information and a lot of decisions are made on experience of previous pandemics, but we sit with a new virus, and completely new world circumstances.

Q: So how must we plan our lives?

A: The Philosophical answer is, be better safe than sorry, do common sense things like reducing physical contact, refrain from cramped gatherings, live a healthy lifestyle and spend more time with your cattle, they don't transfer this virus.

Lastly, be aware of people and crooks that want to exploit this situation. Don't believe people who want to sell you the "cure" or preventative treatment. Be aware of criminals that want to obtain entry to your castle for dubious reasons.

Regards,

Oswald Jannasch

