The cattle dipping policy is guided by the National as well as Provincial priorities which recognizes the uniqueness of the province as reflected on the political priorities and the understanding that South Africa is a developmental state. Our government policies emphasize the need to support small scale farmers and the rural development policy enjoins us in these efforts. It is therefore without doubt that to ensure the good health and productivity of the provincial herd, cattle dipping is paramount. The history has, through the control of diseases like Rinderpest and East Coast Fever, taught us that the cattle dipping is one of the key elements to successful cattle farming.

The policy take into cognizance that large number of cattle resides in the hands of resource poor communities whose rural livelihoods are interwoven with animal husbandry as they are used for draught power and income generation. We cannot underestimate the importance of cattle in the social welfare of our communities as they are used in various traditional purposes (ukunqula izinyanya, ubulawu nokwendiselana). Cattle dipping shall enhance reproductive potential and productivity, thus contributing to economic wellbeing of the rural communities.
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DEFINITIONS

Acaracide – is a chemical or a drug used to control ticks in a dipping facility.

Animal Health Technician (AHT) – is an officer registered with the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) mainly responsible for animal health related duties under the Animal Diseases Act, Act35 of 1984, as well as provision of Primary Animal Healthcare (PAHC).

Cattle dipping facility – is a facility constructed for the dipping of animals to control ticks and tick-borne diseases. It can either be a plunge dip, a spray race or a handling facility for the use of pour-on acaracides.

Community Animal Health Worker (CAHW) – is an officer employed by the Department to look after the dipping facility and the dipping of animals.

Screw worm – is a maggot form from a parasitic fly known for eating living tissues of warm-blooded animals.

State Veterinarian – is any person who is employed by the State and is registered or deemed to be registered in terms of Veterinary and Para-veterinary Act, 19 of 1982 to practise in the veterinary profession.

Tick-borne diseases {Redwater (Umanzabomvu), Heartwater (isifo somkhondo), Gallsickness (Inyongo)} – is a group of diseases affecting domestic as well as game animals, transmitted through tick-bite and has a potential to kill the animal or cause production losses.

The Department – refers to the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

An outbreak of East Coast fever, a disease caused by the parasite Theileria parva, transmitted by the brown ear tick, *Rhipicephalus appendiculatus*, was experienced in South Africa in 1914 resulting in massive cattle deaths. In an effort to control the disease, a Government order was issued making weekly cattle dipping compulsory at the owner’s costs. By this method *East Coast Fever was eradicated in 1954.*

The Animal Diseases and Parasites Act (Act 13 of 1956) provided for the State to supply the necessary facilities and the relevant dips for the control of ticks and tick-borne diseases and to prevent the re-emergence of East Coast Fever. To this day, dipping of livestock has continued with the sole purpose of controlling and reducing less severe forms of tick-borne diseases such as red water (*Babesia spp.*), gallsickness (*Anaplasma spp.*), and heartwater (*Ehrlichia {Cowdria} ruminatium*) and minimizing tick damage to animals which may result in screwworm infestation (*Chrysomya spp*), as supported by Animal Health Act 7 of 2002.

The regular dipping of cattle had other benefits for Veterinary Services in the country in that Veterinary personnel were able to monitor the general health of the communal herds, record figures for census purposes and carry out surveillance on trade sensitive diseases such Anthrax, Rift Valley Fever, Chronic Bovine Pleuropneumonia, etc. which may trigger suspension of exports of livestock and livestock products and those that have public human health implications such as tuberculosis and brucellosis.

To this end the State persisted with the service to promote livestock disease stability, animal production and promote enshrined government priorities. In an effort to ensure that dipping of cattle is carried out in a manner beneficial to the rural communities, and encourage social cohesion and stability, it is essential that dipping be carried out at regular intervals especially during the times of a heavy tick challenge.
1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy document is to establish accepted guiding principles on cattle dipping in the Eastern Cape Province to meet the dipping needs of all the agro-ecological zones of the province. This policy will be used as a framework for the control of ticks and prevent tick-borne disease in a sustainable manner in order to promote the health and condition of cattle. This will lead to improved rural livelihoods of cattle farmers by promoting and ensuring rural economic development through cattle farming.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of the dipping policy is to achieve the following:

2.1 Ensure that the provincial herd in the hands of the resource poor communities is protected from tick borne diseases and tick associated physical damage.

2.2 Regulate cattle dipping to ensure that proper dipping regimen is followed.

2.3 Ensure precise record keeping of stock numbers (birth, death, sales) which will also contribute to the traceability of the livestock.

2.4 Standardize cattle movement to ensure that disease spread is minimized.
3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1. Agricultural Development Act, Act 8 of 1999
3.2. Animal Health Act, Act 7 of 2002
4. PRINCIPLES, VALUES & PHILOSOPHY

4.1. Principles:

The dipping policy shall be based on internationally and locally accepted norms of livestock farming with full compliance of all laws and regulations which regulate and encourage judicious use of natural resource. These include the correct implementation of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Act 107 of 1998, acknowledgement and respect of traditional, indigenous knowledge and values associated with livestock farming.

The underlying principle of the policy is a harmonious, sustainable communal livestock production system with the resource poor farmers at centre stage and driving the dipping process.

4.2. Values

4.2.1 Innovation:

Committed to keep abreast of new developments in the field of veterinary science and be innovative in carrying out the mandate of the department to encourage food security and promote rural economy.

4.2.2 Bambisanani:

The policy will promote joint efforts as enshrined in the Government priorities by appointing Community Animal Health Workers (CAHW) from the communities / areas where the cattle dipping facilities are situated.
5. SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY

The veterinary services directorate is responsible for the application of the dipping service guided by the Animal Disease Act, Act 35 of 1984 as well as the Veterinary and Para-Veterinary Professions Act, Act 19 of 1982. The staff that will be conducting the service will include State Veterinarian, Animal Health Technicians and Community Animal Health Workers in partnership with the dipping committees representing cattle farmers.

The South African Veterinary Council regulated by the Veterinary and Para-Veterinary Professions Act, Act 19 of 1982 requires that certain activities that deal with animal health be conducted or supervised by a professional person registered with the council. Therefore the monitoring and evaluation will be done by a State Veterinarian or Animal Health technician. The dipping and dipping management will be done by a trained Community Animal Health Worker. Training becomes a requirement as dipping includes handling of poisonous material or substance. The suppliers of acaracides will be involved in the dipping management and monitoring in order to achieve the required expectations.

The communal/subsistence and emerging livestock owners of the Eastern Cape Province will benefit from this policy. These include all smallholder livestock owners and / individual farmer from rural farming areas of the Eastern Cape Province.
6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

The premise of this policy relies on the following procedures:-

6.1. Availability of a functional dipping facility which will be determined by livestock numbers (500-700) to be dipped, and distance (4-5 km radius) to be travelled by the animals to reach the dipping facility;

6.2. The facility could be a plunge dip tank, spray race or handling facility. Dipping facilities /infrastructure will be provided based on the application made by the affected community/farmer in consultation with Veterinary and Extension services Directorates (see attached application form). In case of a Plunge dip tank, it should include a proper handling facility, a neck clamp and loading rack, to serve as a multi-purpose facility;

6.3. Facility specifications should be discussed and agreed upon between Local Engineering and Veterinary Service Directorates in consultation with the affected farming community or a farmer;

6.4. Dipping facility shall be officially handed over to the Traditional Council on behalf of the community or to an entity/association/farmer if they fall outside the jurisdiction of a traditional council.

6.5. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) must be signed committing the Traditional Council or entity/association/farmer to look after the facility;

6.6. In every dipping site, there must be a dipping committee established to partner with the department in executing the dipping functions;

6.7. Dipping committees shall be composed of cattle owners and revived and elected annually. The chief and Councillor should be a ex-officio member of the committee;

6.8. All villages of a dipping area should be represented on the dipping committee;
6.9. A Community Animal Health Workers (CAHW) shall be employed and deployed, on behalf of the department, servicing a minimum of two dipping sites to ensure proper dipping programme;

6.10. The provision and supply of acaracides to the communal and emerging livestock farmers will be done by the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) as proclaimed in the policy speech by the Member of the Executive Council for 2010/2011 financial year;

6.11. The provincial budget for acaracides shall be ring-fenced and allocated per each district to address their peculiar needs;

6.12. All farmers are expected to bring all their cattle to the dipping site on the scheduled day;

6.13. Farmers, through dipping committees, will be encouraged to replenish the dip tank with fresh water and the drainage of used water from the dip tank;

6.14. A SLA between the department, the dipping committees and local municipalities should be made for effective maintenance and repairs of the dipping tanks;

6.15. Livestock permits shall be issued by the department in consultation with the respective Traditional leaders for any movement of livestock from one dipping area to another and beyond to minimise disease spread within the province and country (see annexure A).
7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform shall:

71.1. Employ the State Veterinarians, the Animal Health Technicians and Community Animal Health Workers to assist in running of the dipping service to the communities.

71.2. Select, procure and provide acaracides

71.3. Engage farmers in the executing of function no (71.2.), especially at district level.

71.4. Provide training to Dipping Committees

71.5. Facilitate and approve applications of new dipping structures

71.6. Provide for the construction of new approved dipping structures in consultation with affected communities.

71.7. Provide training to the traditional leadership and relevant community members (dipping committees) on the management of dipping tanks and use of acaracides.

7.2. Local Municipality:

72.1. Assist in renovation and maintenance of dipping infrastructure in consultation with the traditional leadership of that community.

7.3. Traditional Leadership

73.1. Formulate community by-laws to enforce dipping within their communities

73.2. Issue and receive permits of livestock moving out of the community and those coming into the community.

73.3. Encourage their communities to brand their livestock.

73.4. Store the dipping material in agreement and on behalf of the community.
7.4 **State Veterinarian:**

7.4.1. Check and monitor tick resistance to the acaracide used and undertake necessary scientific action in partnership with the relevant stake holders to remedy any resistance identified.

7.4.2. Undertake research for alternative means of tick control, incorporating indigenous knowledge systems.

7.4.3. To oversee the overall function of cattle dipping that resides with the Animal Health Technicians.

7.5 **Animal Health Technician:**

7.5.1. Visit the cattle dipping facility every month to ensure proper dipping management.

7.5.2. Provide suitable dipping acaracides to the community.

7.5.3. Monitor stock register at each visit and sign

7.6 **Community Animal Health Worker:**

7.6.1. Ensure that each dipping facility receives the dipping material.

7.6.2. Ensure proper mixing at every dipping session.

7.6.3. Responsible for the keeping of dipping material in a safe place.

7.6.4. Count and record all animals dipped at each dipping in stock card and dipping register.

7.6.5. Register new born calves, animals introduced and cattle deaths at each dipping

7.6.6. Keep the dipping register.

7.6.7. Register all requests for movement of cattle and alert the AHT to give approval.

7.6.8. Reports the animals dipped to the AHT every month.
7.7. **Dipping Committee:**

7.7.1. Ensure that dipping programme is followed as schedule and all cattle are dipped.

7.7.2. tore and safe keep the acaracides under supervision by CAHW.

7.7.3. Coordinate replenishment and filling of water into the dipping facility.

7.7.4. Assist CAHW in mixing the dipping acaracides according to stipulated measures.

7.7.5. Assist in record-keeping.

7.7.6. Receive spleen as proof of the dead or slaughtered cattle and report such to the CAHW.

7.7.7. Report to the CAHW/AHT any (tick borne) disease incidences / outbreaks and any other animal disease.

7.7.8. Report stray cattle in the community.

7.8 **Cattle Owners:**

7.8.1. Bring all cattle and the stock cards at each dipping, including stray animals (imiduka).

7.8.2. Safe keeping of their stock cards.

7.8.3. Cattle owners should be at the center of maintaining dipping facilities and assist dipping committee

7.8.4. Participate in minor maintenance of the dipping facility.

7.8.5. Brand their livestock to minimize stock theft.

7.8.6. Formulate community by-laws to enforce dipping through local authorities/ traditional leaders.

7.8.7. Be part of the monitoring committee before, during and after construction process.

7.8.8. Organize themselves into entities
8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Procurement of acaracides and construction of dipping facilities shall be budgeted for by DRDAR. Local Government may assist DRDAR in the renovation and maintenance of dipping facilities. The local municipalities are encouraged to incorporate animal husbandry infrastructure repairs and requirements in their Integrated Development Plans (IDP’s) as part of the local economic development plan.

The Department shall remain responsible for employment of personnel associated with the dipping function.

9. MONITORING & EVALUATION

2.1. Dip mixing specification shall be strictly followed by CAHW
2.2. Dipping committees shall be established for each and every dipping site for coordination of dipping programme
2.3. Dipping schedule shall be developed and adhered to
2.4. Monthly dipping records shall be submitted to AHT
2.5. Stock numbers verified annually.

10. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be assessed in 5 years from its effective date to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. This policy may be assessed before that time as necessary to reflect substantial organisational changes or any change required by law.
11. RECOMMENDATIONS & APPROVALS

Comments:

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DATE

07/06/13

DATE

APPROVED

Comments:

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DATE

31/10/13

HON: Z R CAPA
MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DRDAR)