

Security cited in foot and mouth outbreak

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British officials says an outbreak of foot and mouth virus may have been spread accidentally by construction workers at a government lab.

A report on last month's outbreak said there was a lapse in biosecurity at a laboratory in Surrey involving 120 builders, The Guardian said Wednesday.

The British newspaper said the report raises the possibility that tires on one of the construction worker's cars inadvertently carried the virus to two farms where the outbreak occurred. The farms were four miles from a maximum security laboratory shared by the government Institute for Animal Health and a pharmaceutical firm.

The report said it also was possible inadequate drainage pipes from the site may have led to a microscopic leak, possibly caused by flooding at the time.

The outbreak led to the slaughter of 600 cattle and a complete ban on all animal movements.

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