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GMO MEALIE MEAL FROM SOUTH AFRICA IS SAFE

As the Authority assures that risk assessment has been conducted on the maize events

CHILANGA, ZAMBIA- THE National Biosafety Authority (NBA) has assured the nation that the mealie meal from South Africa produced from genetically modified maize is safe for consumption.

The Authority is working with other Government institutions to ensure that mealie meal that may contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to be imported and transited through the country is from the maize varieties that have been authorized by the NBA. The Authority, working together with the Ministry of Agriculture, has been notifying anyone importing mealie meal or any other products which may contain GMOs on the need to obtain authorization from the NBA.

The NBA has conducted risk assessments on maize and soya varieties from South Africa and have been found to be safe for human and animal consumption. The Authority has previously granted permits for products made from GMO maize or which may contain GMOs to various distributors and traders in the country.

“We have conducted risk assessments on soya beans and all maize varieties from South Africa and these have been found to be safe for humans, animals and the environment. Therefore, all products including mealie meal produced from the assessed maize varieties are safe for human and animal consumption,” NBA Scientific Advisory Committee Chairperson Dr. Sody Munsaka says.

“Among the products containing GMO maize or Soya beans from South Africa that the Authority has permitted into the country include cornflakes, some soups such as Bisto, premixes, spices, some biscuits, Starch, maize grit and dog food.”

Risk Assessment is the process through which the Scientific Advisory Committee ascertains the safety of products before the Authority grants a permit or rejects an application.

“Therefore, we would like to assure the general public that the mealie meal from the assessed maize by the Scientific Advisory Committee is safe, even if it is spilled or dropped in the country or people accidentally consumed it, it cannot cause any harm based on the comfort ascertained through risk assessment.”

-Ends-

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About NBA

NBA was established under the Biosafety Act No. 10 of 2007. Through the Act the NBA regulates the research, development, application, importation, export, transit, contained use, release or placing on the market of any GMO/LMO whether intended for use as a pharmaceutical, food, feed or processing, or a product of a GMO also to ensure that any activity involving the use or a product of GMO prevents any socio-economic impact or harm to human, animal health and the environment in the country.

Some of the functions of the NBA include processing notifications and applications of GMOs or products of GMOs into the country, in accordance with the requirements of the Biosafety Act, promoting public awareness and education concerning the activities regulated under the Act such as risk assessment, risk management and authorization processes; keeping any GMO or any product of a genetically modified organism under review and to ban its handling or release in Zambia. NBA furthermore, establishes and maintains a database of GMOs and their products as well as making available such information to the public.

For more information about NBA visit: www.nbazambia.org.zm.

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