



PRESS RELEASE

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22 FEBRUARY, 2024

MEALIE MEAL WHICH MAY CONTAIN GMOS SEIZED AND DESTROYED IN KAZUNGULA *As the Authority warns transit permit holders against offloading GMO products on the Zambian market*

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA-The National Biosafety Authority (NBA) has seized and destroyed twenty-five bags by 25 kilograms of mealie meal that may contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in Kazungula-Southern Province.

The bags of mealie meal were intercepted by the inspectors and other enforcement agencies. Last Friday a joint team of law enforcement agencies seized 12 bags of Papa Super maize meal which was found in the district believed to have been offloaded from a truck and placed on the market illegally. This followed a tip-off alert from members of the public who were suspicious of the product.

“Further investigations led to the Authority seizing another 13 bags of the mealie meal which may contain GMOs. The products were seized as they were placed on the market without prior authorization from the Authority. The traders have no permit to either import or place on the market the mealie meal. The Biosafety Act prohibits anyone to bring into the country a product of a GMO or GMOs without prior authorization from the NBA. The products were also seized as risk assessment had not been conducted on them to ascertain their safety.

“The two traders were arrested by the Zambia Police and taken to court where it was determined that the products be destroyed. An unknown trucker is believed to have offloaded the mealie meal in Kazungula. Investigations have been instituted into the matter.”

The Authority would like to commend the residents of Kazungula for being alert and calls on the public and traders to desist from dealing in products which may contain GMOs without seeking prior authorization from the NBA.

“We have been engaging the public on our regulatory role and what to look out for. We are happy with positive response from general public on being alert and able to come forth with such vital information.”

The Authority would like to warn transit permit holders not to offload on the Zambian market any of the GMOs and their products transiting as they risk their authorization being cancelled and the law taking its course.

Meanwhile the Authority is aware of the GMO mealie meal which is alleged to have been stolen from the Zambia National Service (ZNS) warehouse on no man's land bordering Zambia and DRC. The NBA officers are on the ground to ascertain whether the GMO mealie meal could have found itself back into the Zambian side.

The product in transit exited Zambia for DRC and the theft is reported to have occurred at the no man's land.

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About NBA

NBA is a statutory body under the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment. It 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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