



PRESS RELEASE

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NBA GRANTS CHOPPIES SUPERSTORES A PERMIT TO IMPORT PRODUCTS THAT MAY CONTAIN GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOS).

As confiscated goods are destroyed

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA- THE National Biosafety Authority (NBA) has granted chain store Choppies Superstores a permit to import products that may contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Choppies Superstores made an application for the importation of products that are made from GMOs or may contain GMOs in May this year.

Among the products the chain store will import and place on the market include Instant Choppies Porridge (three different flavors including Original and Strawberry), Chilli Beef Flavored Soup, Oxtail Flavored Soup, Chakalaka Flavored Soup, Brown Onion Soup and Choppies Corn Flakes.

The NBA Board, during their last meeting held Friday July 6, 2018, approved the application for a permit to import products that may contain GMOs by Choppies Superstores following a recommendation from the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC of the NBA met in June this year, and among other issues, reviewed and considered the Choppies Superstores permit application. The SAC, after conducting a risk assessment, found that the products that Choppies Superstores sought to import did not contain toxins and allergens that might cause harm to the humans, animals and the environment.

In April this year the NBA accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Health, Lusaka City Council and the police swung into action and pounced on the unsuspecting Lake Road and Ibex

Choppies Superstores confiscating food products worth over K 21,000 which were brought in the country and placed on the market without obtaining approval from the Authority. The chain store was also directed to withdraw all products containing GMOs from the shelves across the country that were being sold without prior approval from the Authority. The NBA in the presence of Choppies officials and law enforcement agencies destroyed the products which were confiscated from Superstores since they were not subjected to risk assessment, prior to their importation, in order to ascertain their safety as food or feed.

Meanwhile the NBA has issued 23 permits since 2015 to various companies for the importation and or placing on the market of products that may contain genetically modified organisms. The import permits are valid for 5 years while permits for placing on the market range between three to six months to ensure compliance and prevent companies from contravening the law.

The NBA would like to encourage and advise wholesalers, distributors and suppliers to ensure that they give copies of permits for import or placing on the market to retailers and traders they supply genetically modified products to avoid being inconvenienced or penalized.

The NBA is the only regulatory body which considers products that may contain GMOs to be placed on the market after risk assessment and upon granting of a permit. The Authority also regulates GMO products transiting through the country.

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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 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 you can like our Facebook page: NBA-Zambia and follow us on twitter: @NBA_Zambia

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