



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **NBA DIRECTS BAKERIES AND BUTCHERIES USING GMO INGREDIENTS TO LABEL THEIR PRODUCTS**

*As failure to do so will result in the Authority enforcing provisions of the Biosafety Act*

LUSAKA- ZAMBIA, THE National Biosafety Authority (NBA) has called on butcheries using spices which may contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to clearly label their products so that consumers make informed decisions.

The Authority has also directed bakery owners using ingredients made from or which may contain genetically modified organisms to label them without fail.

NBA Chief Executive Officer, Mr Lackson Tonga, said it was important that all products containing ingredients of genetically modified organisms are labelled.

“It is a requirement by law that all products which are made from genetically modified organisms or which contain ingredients of GMOs are clearly labelled so that consumers make an informed choice or decision when buying such food products,” he said.

“ As such we are giving all producers using products such as baking ingredients and butcheries using spices which contain GMOs **two weeks** in which to start labelling their products, failure to do so they will be dealt with according to the provisions of the law.”

“Consumers have the right to know what ingredients are in the products they are buying hence labelling helps. When we insist on labelling it does not mean the products are dangerous, no. All we just want the consumers to know what they are eating. It is also a requirement by law that the products are labelled. The GMO products or products which may contain GMOs which have been permitted on the Zambian market have been found to be safe for the humans, animals and the environment, after risk assessment was conducted on them. ”

Mr Tonga also said the NBA is pleased that distributors are giving their clients copies of permits to place on the market.

“The shops that we inspected on the Copperbelt we found that they had copies of the permits for placing on the market from their suppliers. This is good because some time back we have issued an ultimatum that they should have such documents in their shops, otherwise we would seize their products.”

Meanwhile the Authority is happy with the compliance levels to biosafety standards by the laboratories dealing with GMO products. The NBA during its spot and compliance checks observed that most of the laboratories handling GMO products were adhering to good biosafety standards.

“We were on the Copperbelt last week and visited the Zambia Emory HIV Research Project who are conducting HIV clinical trials using a vaccine made using genetic modification. We were impressed with what we found on the ground. The compliance to the permit conditions and adherence to good Biosafety Standards is satisfactory,” Mr Tonga said.

**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](http://www.nbazambia.org.zm),

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