



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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MINISTER ZOKWANA CONDUCTED SITE VISIT TO ENTERPRISE FOODS IN POLOKWANE, LIMPOPO TO CHECK PROGRESS ON CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED AT THE PLANT

As the authority responsible for export facilitation of processed meats, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries's visit to the Enterprise factory in Polokwane was in line with the department's mandate of ensuring safe trade. The Minister wanted assurance that the establishment was working satisfactorily on corrective measures to assure trade partners that South African products were safe.

The Minister met with the CEO of Tiger Brands, Mr Lawrence McDougall and top management of the establishment on Monday, 19 March and was taken through the processes undertaken by the food giant to respond to the Listeriosis outbreak. A site visit of the plant was arranged for the Minister to observe progress made. DAFF and Provincial Departments of Agriculture, through the provincial veterinary authorities, are responsible for export facilitation of products of animal origin, including processed meats. All products to be exported are certified by official veterinarians employed by Provincial Departments of Agriculture and the certification is based on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) principles agreed upon by trade partners. DAFF engages trade partners to open and maintain trade relations and has a responsibility of monitoring the facilitation of this critical function.

Furthermore, the DAFF has a mandate in terms of regulating the importation of meat and meat products. This mandate is derived from the **Meat Safety Act of 2000 and Animal Diseases Act of 1984**. The regulation of imported raw material such as mechanically deboned meat (MDM)—which is used as raw material in the manufacturing of processed meats, is imported in compliance with these legislative pieces. DAFF officials at the ports of entry monitor and inspect all imported products of animal origin. All imported meat including MDM, is inspected upon arrival, sampled and microbiologically tested for the presence of pathogens. The pathogens of interest include salmonella, *E.coli*, and recently Listeria. To date there has been no imported MDM which has tested positive for the Listeria Monocytogenes ST6 strain, which is causing the current Listeriosis outbreak.

"We are aware of the recent challenges related to an establishment in Brazil (BRF S/A) which is under investigation by the Brazilian authorities for food fraud. The department has officially engaged the Brazilian authorities and we have already received a response which indicates that there are three establishments that are under investigation, and an additional three laboratories that service these establishments. These establishments have been

suspended by the Brazilian authorities until the conclusion of the investigation, and in addition, DAFF has also suspended their imports.” said Minister Zokwana.

Issued by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Forestry

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