



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY

PUBLIC NOTICE

REVIEW OF IMPORT CONDITIONS FOR READY-TO-EAT FOODS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA DUE TO OUTBREAK OF LISTERIOSIS CAUSED BY *LISTERIA MONOCYTOGENES*

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) would like to inform importers and the Namibian public about the review of import and in transit of ready-to-eat foods such as polony, russian, frankfurters, viennas, all types of hams and salamis from South Africa due to the outbreak of listeriosis caused by *Listeria monocytogenes*. This review is issued in terms of Section 11(1) of the Animal Health Act, 2011 (Act No. 1 of 2011).

The new import requirements prohibit the following ready-to-eat foods or processed meat products from being imported into Namibia or in transit:

- All products such as polony, smoked russians and other russians, viennas, sausages, frankfurters, all types of hams and salamis produced under the following brands: Enterprise, Renown, Bokkie, Mielikip and Lifestyle produced by Enterprise Polokwane (ZA 33), Enterprise Foods Germiston (ZA 126)
- All ready to eat meat products from Rain Bow Chicken (RCL) Foods (ZA 32).

Kindly note that canned meat products that were produced before the ban on 04 March 2018 are excluded on condition that the hygiene management system implemented provides guarantees to the official certifying South African veterinarian that the canned meat products are sterilised at the appropriate temperatures, not contaminated on the surface and are not implicated in the Listeria outbreak.

It should be noted that South Africa has suspended export of processed meat from the three establishments to all its trading partners until the establishments have fully implemented corrective actions that are audited by the regulatory authorities. Likewise Namibia has stopped the importation of processed products such as polony, smoked russian and other russian, viennas, sausages, frankfurters, all types of hams and salamis from these three establishments.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and Ministry of Health and Social Services will be implementing random sampling and testing of imported and locally produced ready-to-eat foods for all microbes including *Listeria monocytogenes* bacterium.

Listeriosis food poisoning is caused by eating foods contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* bacterium. The disease can be more severe in pregnant women, young children and the elderly as well as other immune compromised persons.

The symptoms of listeriosis include fever, muscle aches, sometimes nausea or diarrhea, headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and convulsions. The disease is treatable thus the public should visit health facilities for medical assistance when experiencing some or all the symptoms aforementioned.

Listeriosis can be prevented by practising safe food handling practices such as washing hands before and after handling food, washing hands after using the bathroom or toilet. Food must be cooked well and stored safely away from raw food. Drinking raw (unpasteurised) milk or eating foods that contain unpasteurised milk should be avoided.

Ready to eat meat is any meat or meat products considered ready to eat and do not require additional cooking to be safely consumed.

Importers are urged to contact the Veterinary Import/ Export Office for further information on the review of import conditions.

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