

Agbiz Grain media statement

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For immediate release

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Agbiz Grain members continue to accept maize under the 2009 regulations

Given the extreme uncertainty surrounding the dispensation at the time of going to press, Agbiz Grain members have decided to continue accepting the delivery of maize according to the grading regulations published in the *Government Gazette* in 2009. At the time of going to press it is the only correct and legally supported document to rely on.

Representative organisations in the grain and oilseeds sector of organised agriculture submitted a proposed amendment to the maize grading regulations as early as 11 August 2021. As these amendments could not be added to the regulations in time for the new marketing year, the maize industry applied for a voluntary dispensation on 9 March 2022. Agbiz Grain supported the application for a dispensation. The purpose of the dispensation was to fast-forward the implementation of the regulations before the delivery of maize commences for the new marketing year.

By the time the dispensation was issued by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) on 26 April, early deliveries for the new marketing season have already commenced during April. The new marketing year for maize starts on 1 May. A wrong version of the dispensation was issued on 26 April compromising the dispensation and rendering the delivery of maize according to the proposed amendment impossible. A reviewed correct version of the dispensation was still not issued by the time of going to press on 6 May, 11 days later.

In the meantime, certain buyers and processors have indicated the unintended risks posed and that they will strongly oppose the acceptance of maize under a non-binding dispensation after the start of the marketing year. Especially as DALRRD stated in the dispensation that if anybody approaches DALRRD with a valid motivation the dispensation can be recalled. Buyers indicated that they will oppose the dispensation strongly.

Agbiz Grain recommends that stakeholders submit their views as a matter of urgency to DALRRD.

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