# FDA'S POSITION ON FORMALIN-TREATED "KOOBI" (DRIED SALTED TILAPIA)

The attention of the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) was drawn to a statement attributed to the Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation to the effect that some "koobi" processors use formalin to preserve the fish.

Formalin is a potential cancer-causing chemical which should not be used as a food processing aid or as a food additive. Its use in food therefore is harmful and injurious to health.

The FDA as a state agency mandated to protect public health, takes a serious view of this practice and has as a matter of urgency initiated investigations into the report; because such a practice contravenes Section 100 (3) of the Public Health Act, 2012, (Act 851) which states that ***"A person commits an offence if that person sells or offers for sale a food that***

***(a) has in or on it a poisonous or harmful substance;***

***(b) is unwholesome or unfit for human or animal consumption and***

***(e) is injurious to health"***.

The Authority has therefore sampled "koobi" from major processing sites in the Volta Region and has subjected them to testing at the FDA's ISO accredited laboratory.

Additionally, samples from seventy-two (72) different batches of "koobi" from twenty-eight (28) markets in the Greater Accra, Eastern, Central and Volta Regions have been analysed at the Authority's laboratory.

The results so far indicate that none of the sampled "koobi" had formalin in them.

The FDA wishes to assure the general public that it will not renege on its mandate in applying the necessary regulatory measures to protect public health and safety at all times.

The Authority also wishes to use this platform to caution food processors or any persons in the food industry who may be involved in activities that have the potential of endangering public health and safety to desist from such practices. The FDA will not hesitate to apply the appropriate regulatory sanctions against any individual or persons found culpable.

The investigation is on-going and more samples would be taken from across the country after which the general public will be updated accordingly.

The FDA is currently in the process of coming out with a structured strategy to engage all key stakeholders in order to forestall such occurrences.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**