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FDA STATEMENT ON ALLEGED “PLASTIC” RICE ON THE GHANAIAN MARKET

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) has noted the circulation of several videos on social media claiming the existence of plastic rice on the Ghanaian market, which is of public concern.

In 2017, the FDA on the basis of these videos, investigated the claims and issued a press statement denying the existence of plastic rice.

As part of that investigation, and through our nationwide market surveillance activities, the Authority obtained random samples and subsequently requested members of the public to assist our investigations by either submitting samples of the alleged plastic rice or giving information of where they could be found.

The samples received were subjected to laboratory analyses. Results from the analyses showed that all the samples were in fact authentic rice and not plastic as perceived by the public.

It is important to note that, the physical and chemical properties of plastics are such that they cannot be cooked into edible food. This is because plastic cannot absorb water and does not mix with water.

The texture of each variety of rice depends on the nature of the starch content. Starch is mainly made up of amylose and amylopectin. The ratio of amylose to amylopectin determines the texture of rice. Amylopectin is responsible for the sticky nature of rice. This character of the starch in rice makes cooked rice grains stick together and allows it to be formed into a ball that can bounce off hard surfaces as depicted in some of the videos on social media. Amylose is responsible for the gummy nature of rice and therefore adds to the bouncy property of the rice when made into balls.

The FDA therefore wishes to inform the public that the videos on the alleged plastic rice are false and must be ignored. The public should be assured that the FDA will continue to monitor the quality and safety of the varieties of rice on the market, both local and imported, to safeguard public health and safety.

For further information, please contact the FDA on any of the following:

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Your wellbeing, our priority.

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