

PRESS RELEASE

(for immediate release)

RPO CONCERNED ABOUT LISTERIA

The national Red Meat Producers' Organisation (RPO) shares the consumer's concern about Listeria and the source thereof identified by the Department of Health.

The RPO is satisfied that the total red meat industry follows a very responsible approach as far as the safety of red meat and red meat products is concerned. The independent meat inspection services contribute considerably towards the prevention of diseases like Listeria. Self-regulation is an important aspect of any agricultural commodity and the red meat industry is known for its good self-regulation practices and the fact that it does not only rely on Government to render necessary services.

The RPO recommends that every consumer maintains a good relationship with his/her butcher and follow the following important rules :-

- Fresh food/meat is the best.
- Buy local and chat with your butcher about your concerns.
- If you buy from a retailer where no butcher is available, check the "*sell-by-date*" and packaging before you pay.
- Practice food hygiene at home – do not defrost meat in the sun or hot water in a sink, because it is not safe. Defrost in the fridge to prevent creating an environment for bacteria to thrive in. Don't put barbequed meat back into the bowl you used for the uncooked meat. Cook your meat thoroughly, store leftovers in the fridge and cover food after serving.

= 2 =

- Report bad hygiene practices or suspicious slaughtering practices to the National Consumer Commission (www.thencc.gov.za). They look after your rights of safe and good quality goods.

The World Health Organization's five keys to food safety are the following :-

- Keep clean. Wash your hands before handling food and often during food preparation.
- Separate raw and cooked food. If you are handling or storing raw food, do not touch already cooked food unless you have already washed your hands and food preparation utensils.
- Cook food thoroughly. Food that does not usually need cooking before eating should be washed thoroughly with clean running water.
- Keep food at safe temperatures.
- Use safe water for domestic use at all times or boil before use.

- o O o

6 March 2018

ENQUIRIES :

Mr Koos van der Ryst
Chairman
Cell : 083 303 7926

Mr Gerhard Schutte
CEO
Cell : 082 556 7296