

Quality Control on Procurement and Commercialisation of Long Grain White Rice (Ration Rice)

- 1.** The State Trading Corporation (STC) as the trading arm of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius, has the responsibility to procure and supply Long Grain White Rice of 5% broken grade (Riz Ration) for Mauritius and Rodrigues. The annual requirements are around 24,000. As this rice is consumed mostly by the vulnerable group of people, it is sold at a subsidised price of only Rs 10.80 per kg against its actual cost of around Rs 35.00 per kg as at to date.
- 2.** It ensures that the said rice meets all the necessary qualities / characteristics as per the product specifications which are clearly mentioned in its bid document during the bidding exercise.
- 3.** As regard to quality control, in line with the established procedures at the STC, an internationally recognized, independent and accredited Surveying entity ensures that the rice meet all the specifications as required by the STC.

Prior to shipment, with a view to mitigate the risk of infestation, the rice is fumigated by an authorised agency. Moreover, a Phytosanitary Certificate is also issued by the concerned Ministry of the country of exportation. As soon as the consignment reaches the premises of STC's warehouse, another fumigation exercise is carried out in the containers by the Entomology Division of the Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security.

- 4.** Only after the completion of the above processes, the rice containers are unstuffed in the warehouse of the STC. Thereafter, the Mauritius Standards Bureau (MSB) which is mandated to develop national standards and provide conformity assessment services, carries out sampling and test analysis on the various samples of the said rice. Once the MSB confirms that the rice meets the STC's required specifications, deliveries from Warehouse to its registered traders and appointed packers/distributors are effected by the STC.
- 5.** In order to ensure that the quality of the rice is maintained till the whole consignment is delivered, the STC through the Entomology Division of the above mentioned Ministry carries out fogging exercise in the warehouse on a monthly basis.
- 6.** As per records at the STC, since the very first batch of importation of ration rice till the recent one which reached on 6 May 2024, there has not been any formal complaint received at the STC with regard to the presence of plastic rice found in the bags of the ration rice.

Commercial Division

11 June 2024