



Stakeholder Notice

For Immediate Release

07 February 2024

THE FRESH PRODUCE MARKET INQUIRY EMBARKS ON SECOND ROUND OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Fresh Produce Market Inquiry (FPMI) is pleased to announce that the second round of public hearings will take place on 08 and 09 February 2024. This follows the first round of public hearings which took place during October 2023. The hearings are open to the public and will also be live streamed on YouTube.

Public hearings provide an opportunity for the FPMI to engage directly with stakeholders in respect of their submissions around the scope of the FPMI. This round of public hearings is centred around the retailer-level of the value chain with Pick n Pay Retailers and Food Lover's Market expected to participate. Woolworths and Spar already participated during the first round of public hearings and Shoprite Checkers, again, declined to participate in the public hearing process.

The main objective of the FPMI is to identify features, or a combination of features, that impede, restrict, or distort competition and participation in the fresh produce value chain. Where there are competition and/or public interest issues, the FPMI will provide recommendations to foster competition and ensure equitable and meaningful participation in the value chain for the benefit of all stakeholders as well as consumers in the economy.

The public nature of these engagements is important in ensuring a fair and transparent process, where the public is properly informed of the issues and debates which being considered by the FPMI. The FPMI commends the participation of the stakeholders that have accepted its invitation to appear and share their insights.

The hearings and broadcast will commence at 10:00 on each day of the hearings. The venue for the public hearings will be Block C, DTI Campus, Sunnyside, Pretoria.

Background to the FPMI

The FPMI commenced on 31 March 2023, following the publication of its final terms of reference on 14 February 2023. The purpose of the FPMI is to examine whether any features in the fresh produce value chain impede, restrict, or distort competition in the market.

The FPMI is focussed on issues at each layer of the value chain, including the sale of fresh produce by the farmer to the customer (the retailer, processor, or export market).

The Commission has identified three themes that cover the entire fresh produce value chain. The themes are as follows:

- Efficiency of the value chain, with an emphasis on the dynamics around fresh produce market facilities;
- Market dynamics of key inputs and its impact on producers; and
- Barriers to entry, expansion, and participation.

The FPMI operates under a statutory completion period of 18 months and aims to publish its final report in October 2024.

[ENDS]

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