



MALAWI BUREAU OF STANDARDS

Promoting Standardization and Quality Assurance in Malawi

PRESS RELEASE

ENFORCEMENT OF MANDATORY LABELING (MARKING), HANDLING AND STORAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR BAGGED FERTILIZERS

The MBS would like to inform producers, importers and distributors of fertilizers that following market surveillances and the feedback that we get from the market, it has come to our notice that some of the fertilizers do not comply with the mandatory labeling (marking) requirements as stipulated in the following applicable Mandatory Malawi Standards:

- 1) MS 255: 1998; Compound fertilizers- Specification;
- 2) MS 258: 2000; Fertilizers- Ammonium sulphate- Specification;
- 3) MS 271: 2000; Fertilizers- Superphosphate- Specification;
- 4) MS 272: 2000; Fertilizers- Calcium ammonium nitrate- Specification;
- 5) MS 351: 2000; Fertilizers- Urea- Specification;
- 6) MS 352: 2000; Fertilizers-Nitrate of soda-Specification;
- 7) MS 353: 2000; Fertilizers- Ammonium nitrate- Specification;
- 8) MS 354: 2000;Fertilizers- Muriate of potash- Specification;
- 9) MS 355: 2000; Fertilizers- Sulphate of potash- Specification; and
- 10) MS 265: 1991; Bagged fertilizers handling and storage- Code of practice.

The above listed mandatory Malawi Standards provide the following mandatory labeling requirements;

COMPOUND FERTILIZERS (NPK FORMULATIONS):

- a. Name of product and guaranteed percentage of any other nutrient element present;
- b. Name of the manufacturer, registered trademark or trade name;
- c. Net mass in metric units (kg);
- d. Lot or batch identification;
- e. Type of crop for which the fertilizer shall be used;
- f. Country of origin;
- g. A cautionary statement that the fertilizer shall not be swallowed nor eaten and that it should be kept out of reach of children;
- h. Instructions for storage; and
- i. Any other markings required by the country of origin.

ALL FERTILIZERS OTHER THAN COMPOUND FERTILIZERS:

- a. Name of the product;
- b. Name of manufacturer, registered trademark or trade name;

- c. Minimum content of the main nutrient element for the specific type of fertilizer; e.g. minimum Nitrogen content as N for Ammonium nitrate fertilizer and Nitrate of soda fertilizer and minimum Potassium content as K and as K₂O for Sulphate of potash fertilizer;
- d. Net mass in metric units (kg);
- e. Lot or batch identification;
- f. Country of origin;
- g. A cautionary statement that the fertilizer shall not be swallowed nor eaten and that it should be kept out of reach of children;
- h. Instructions for storage; and
- i. Any other markings required by the country of origin.

The MBS would like to inform producers, importers and distributors of fertilizers and the public that noncompliance on labeling the type of crop for which the compound fertilizers shall be used makes it difficult for farmers to apply suitable fertilizers to their crops (maize or tobacco) and that this affects the performances of the crops especially tobacco. The public should know that compound fertilizer that contain some chlorides greater than 2 % m/m affect tobacco crops. The MBS therefore would like to advise farmers especially tobacco farmers to check first if the fertilizer is meant for tobacco before applying it to the crop. In doing so, farmers will avoid applying fertilizer that could damage their crops.

In view of the above, the MBS hereby advises all the importers and distributors:

- 1) To immediately ensure that all their fertilizers fully comply with the requirements of the individual product specifications applicable to the type of fertilizer.
- 2) To immediately ensure compliance with the recommended guidelines on handling and storage of bagged fertilizers
- 3) To immediately procure and access copies of the above mentioned Malawi Standards from our Offices for guidance on proper application of the labelling requirements and recommended proper handling and storage of bagged fertilizers.
- 4) To consult the MBS for any further clarification on any of the issues raised above.

The MBS would therefore, like to inform all stakeholders that it will conduct market surveillance activities to take appropriate action in line with the above mentioned conditions as per the MBS Act, including placing non-complying products on Product Recall or Quarantine depending on criticality of the nonconformance in order to give room for redress of the nonconformities by the defaulters.

For further information and clarification, please contact the Director General, Malawi Bureau of Standards, P.O. Box 946, Blantyre. You can also call on **0887376/444/445/446/447** or email us at mbs@mbsmw.org alternatively visit our website at www.mbsmw.org

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