

Wednesday, 7th January, 2009

PRESS STATEMENT
For Immediate Release

REDUCTION IN MEALIE MEAL PRICES SHOULD BE SUSTAINABLE

CSPR is happy with the announced reduction of mealie meal prices. We thank stakeholders for listening to the concerns raised by various quarters, especially the consumers. It is our hope that this reduction will be sustainable.

As CSPR, it is our hope that the prices in rural areas should be the same as that in Lusaka because the majority of the needy people are in those rural areas. We call on government to put in measures to ensure that mealie meal prices are prices across the board by subsidizing the rural transport costs as a short term measure.

In the long term, government should entice investment of mealers in rural areas through creating an enabling business environment, close to where the maize reserves are. Moreover, most small scale farmers from whom the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) buys maize are found in rural areas, yet they are the ones paying the highest prices for the staple food. This will ensure that mealie meal is produced within the rural areas, ultimately reducing attached costs such as transport and storage.

Doing so will hasten the quest for equal development for all Zambians, whether in rural or urban areas.

Ivy Mutwale,

Program Officer, Information Management and Networking