

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ON

**SUSPENSION OF DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY FISP PACKS IN 2021/2022
AGRICULTURAL SEASON**

BY THE

HON. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (MR M. R. PHIRI), MP

Madam Speaker, as you guided on 21st October, 2021, I will now render a ministerial statement on the suspension of supplementary packs under the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP). This ministerial statement is in response to a point of order raised on Thursday, 21st October, 2021, by Hon. Emmanuel Musonda who is the hon. Member of Parliament for Lupososhi Constituency.

Madam Speaker, as you may recall, on 19th October, 2021, I issued a ministerial statement indicating some adjustments to the implementation of FISP in the 2021/2022 agricultural season. The hon. Members of the House may recall that in my statement, I suspended the distribution of supplementary packs in the current season.

Madam Speaker, allow me to begin by outlining the inputs that farmers will receive this year. For this year's FISP, each farmer will receive one 10 kg bag of maize seed, three bags of Compound D fertiliser and three bags of Urea fertiliser. With regard to the optional supplementary packs, each farmer under the direct input supply system was previously entitled to redeem one of the following packs:

- (a) a sorghum pack which includes 2 x 50 kg Compound D fertiliser, 1 x 50 kg bag of Urea fertiliser and 1 x 5 kg bag of sorghum seed; or

- (b) a groundnut pack which includes 1 x 50 kg bag of Compound D fertiliser and 1 x 20 kg bag of groundnut seed; or
- (c) a soya bean pack which contains 2 x 50 kg bags of Compound D fertiliser and 1 x 50 kg bag of soya bean seed.

Madam Speaker, as Government, we have made the decision to suspend the issuance of supplementary packs due to the following reasons:

- (a) since we have equalised input distribution in all districts of the country and all farmers are now to receive an equal quantity of inputs, the available seed for groundnuts, sorghum and soya beans is not sufficient to cater for the beneficiaries on the programme and it never did anyway; and
- (b) we have received numerous reports of malpractices and wastage in the distribution of seeds under the supplementary pack;

Madam Speaker, in addition to the suspension of supplementary packs, allow me to clarify the non-engagement of transporters in the 2021/2022 agricultural season. As you may be aware, the Government will not engage local transporters in the districts. This measure has been taken to ensure equity across all aspects of the programme and to rationalise expenditure under FISP. The Government owes transporters huge arrears, and therefore, our immediate focus is to dismantle the debt before accumulating more arrears.

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, let me state that this season's adjustments to the programme were made to ensure that FISP is equitable, transparent and cost effective. Let me assure the House that next season's FISP implementation will be comprehensively reviewed to incorporate the views of the various stakeholders.

Madam Speaker, I thank you.
