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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORATE NOTICE: Food contact materials containing plastics and bamboo

The Environmental Health Directorate within the Superintendence of Public Health has been following the use of 'bamboo fibres' in food contact materials for some time. During the past year, the European Commission's Food Contact Materials Working Group has also published a document in this respect. In recent weeks, this matter has escalated even further and, although in Malta imports from third countries have already been stopped, consumers must be informed to stop using such materials.

The use of 'bamboo' with plastic materials is **not authorised** for use in food contact materials. Furthermore, in the past years, several notifications were also shared via the EU's **Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed** due to the presence of **melamine and formaldehyde** in exceedances of EU regulations. Furthermore, these materials are also sometimes **deceitfully marketed** as 'eco-friendly' or 'natural'.

Given the above, consumers are being notified not to purchase or use any food contact materials which include plates, cups, cutlery, and similar equipment containing plastics and bamboo. Products such as chopsticks or cutting boards, which are made of 100% bamboo, are not involved in this warning.

The EU Commission has also launched a website at https://ec.europa.eu/food/food/agri-food-fraud/eu-coordinated-actions/bamboo-zling_en covering this subject.

For further information, the public is kindly requested to contact the Health Inspectorate Services between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on telephone number 21337333 or by email mhi@gov.mt. The public is also being invited to access the Directorate's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Environmental-Health-Directorate-Malta/145027878928626?ref=hl> or our official website for similar information <https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/environmental/Pages/Home-Page.aspx>.

