

To: All Media  
Attention: News Editors  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SPEND WISELY THIS FESTIVE SEASON - CONSUMER TIPS**

As the festive season approaches, consumers are gearing up for a shopping frenzy, starting with Black Friday and Cyber Monday deals and extending into late December. However, amidst the excitement, the Gauteng Department of Economic Development, through its Gauteng Office of Consumer Affairs office (GOCA), urges consumers to be aware of their consumer rights and responsibilities under the Consumer Protection Act (CPA). Remember, consumers have the right to fair and honest dealings. Be wary of false or misleading advertising, and ensure you receive goods/products that match the advertised description. If a consumer encounters any issues, contact GOCA for assistance. We also remind businesses to adhere to the Act's provisions, particularly regarding pricing, labelling and advertising. By following these tips, you will be well-prepared to navigate the festive season sales while maintaining food safety and making smart bulk purchases.

**Pre-Purchase - Black Friday Tips**

Consumers must prioritise their rights and safety as South Africans gear up for the highly anticipated festive season sales. Before making a purchase, it is essential to research the products and prices to ensure that you are getting the best deals. Verify the product quality, expiration dates, and packaging to avoid potential issues. Check the seller's reputation, ratings, and reviews to ensure that you are buying from a trustworthy source. Understand the warranty terms, return policies, and refund procedures to protect your rights as a consumer. Additionally, ensure that the seller has a physical address, contact information, and customer support. Remember that sales items are not exempted from refunds, returns and replacement if defective. The store policy only applies when the goods are returned voluntarily or the consumer changes his/her mind – buyer's remorse.

**Festive Season - Bulk Buying Tips**

When buying in bulk, calculate the unit prices to ensure that you are getting the best discounts. Avoid overbuying; don't buy more than you can consume. Consider the storage space and product shelf life to avoid waste. Check the expiration dates and "Best Before" labels to ensure that the products are fresh. Divide bulk purchases with friends or family to split the costs and reduce storage needs. Check product packaging for damage or tampering. Store bulk items properly to maintain quality and prevent spoilage. Keep receipts for bulk purchases in case of returns or exchanges.

### **Food Safety Tips**

When purchasing food products, check the expiration dates and "Use By" labels to ensure that the products are fresh. Inspect food packaging for damage or tampering. Do not buy dented or rusted canned foods before or after the valid "Best Before" dates. Such products are dangerous and will cause severe food poisoning that will harm your health. Follow the storage instructions on the labelling of foodstuffs to avoid food poisoning. Consumers have the right to claim against suppliers and manufacturers of goods for damage or injuries suffered due to unsafe and defective goods. *Avoid buying and consuming food without labels.* Inform the Gauteng Office of Consumer Affairs if you notice any alterations in the labelling of goods.

### **Post-Purchase Consumer Tips**

After making a purchase, keep receipts and warranty information for future reference. Inspect products for damage or defects and report concerns to sellers or regulatory authorities (GOCA). File warranty claims for defective products and seek mediation or arbitration for disputes. Check product authenticity and consider alternative brands.

### **Consumer Protection Act Rights**

As a consumer, you have the right to information, choice, privacy, fair and responsible marketing, and accountability and redress. Understand that you have the right to return or exchange goods within a reasonable time and to receive a full refund if the product is defective or not as described. Be cautious of counterfeit goods, especially when shopping online. Only purchase from reputable retailers. Read the fine print, check warranties, return policies, and terms and conditions before making a purchase. Shop safely online, use secure payment methods, and avoid using public Wi-Fi. Keep records save receipts, invoices, and warranties.

Protect yourself and other consumers in your community by lodging complaints against suppliers that sell expired goods or foodstuffs without labelling. Contact the Environmental Health Practitioner (EHP) at the Municipal Offices closest to where the supplier is based. We urge shoppers to be vigilant and report any suspicious or unfair business practices to the Gauteng Office of Consumer Affairs on 011 355 8006 or [consumer@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:consumer@gauteng.gov.za) and other consumer protection authorities.

**Issued by the Gauteng Department of Economic Development.**

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