

**ADDRESS BY MR JANNIE DE VILLIERS, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF THE CHAMBER OF MILLING:
FOOD FORTIFICATION LAUNCH: 1 APRIL 2003**

Minister, Honored Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen!

'A poor surgeon hurts one person at a time ...

A poor teacher hurts 30 to 40 children at a time ...

An irresponsible staple food manufacturer hurts millions!'

The maize and wheat millers of South Africa are proud to be associated with the Department of Health's food fortification program. As the main suppliers of food to our people, we accepted the challenge to improve the nutritional value of the maize meal and bread in this country.

We have noted from the surveys undertaken by the Department of Health that a substantial number of our people, especially children, are suffering from malnutrition. Most of the vulnerable group of people consume substantial quantities of maize meal and bread every day. We believe that the fortification of maize meal and bread will contribute a great deal towards the health – not only of this vulnerable group – but of the population at large. This program will not only increase the daily intake of essential micronutrients by South Africans, but will also save the Government a considerable amount in health expenses annually.

We as millers and bakers in this country are proud that our products, being maize meal, wheat flour and bread, have been selected as the vehicles to improve the nutritional value of food in South Africa. We are making a major financial contribution to make this program possible. A huge number of man hours have gone into the preparation phase to be ready to fortify your maize meal and bread, not only from today, but you would have noted that some of the companies have already started enriching maize meal and bread as we knew that this was the right thing to do.

The Chamber of Milling has undertaken extensive consumer surveys to ensure that the quality, taste and colour of the products are still acceptable to our consumers. We can assure you today that in most instances the consumer trials indicated a preference for the fortified product. We also realise that maize meal and bread are products that one will find in every corner of this country. We, therefore, applaud Government in selecting our products as the most appropriate vehicles to improve the nutritional value of South Africans.

I trust that you will enjoy your meal today and encourage you to keep on buying maize meal and bread of South African origin as they will be even better in the future than they were in the past!

Thank you very much.

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PS.: Mr Jannie de Villiers is the Executive Director of the National Association of Maize Millers which represents 85% of the white millers in South Africa as well as the National Chamber of Milling which represents 97% of the wheat flour millers in South Africa.