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**NATIONAL-LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS CONVENING ON AFLATOXIN CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT CAMPAIGN IN UGANDA.**

Press Release Date: March 26, 2024

KAMPALA – On March 26, 2024, the Food Rights Alliance (FRA); the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF); and the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) launched a national campaign to address the recurring problem of aflatoxin contamination of food and animal feed. Aflatoxins pose a significant health risk to humans and livestock and negatively impact Uganda's agricultural exports. The campaign aims to empower food and feed handlers to reduce aflatoxin contamination. Additional collaborators in the campaign include The Grain Council of Uganda (TGCU), the World Food Programme (WFP), CABI International, the Global Consumers Center, Sasakawa Africa Association, and Feed the Future, the U.S. government’s global hunger and food security initiative.

Aflatoxins are poisonous molds found in crops which pose a serious threat to food safety and public health. A study by Food and Nutrition Solutions, Ltd. at Makerere University linked aflatoxin exposure to an increased risk of liver cancer, stuntedness in livestock and other health disorders, and crop loss, exacerbating hunger in the region. Recent incidents of aflatoxin contamination in food, resulting in Ugandan food exports being blocked due to high aflatoxin presence, highlight the urgency of the issue.

The Joint Advocacy Campaign in Aflatoxin Control will raise awareness of safe food and animal feed handling practices to reduce contamination. The campaign, designed to support locally driven aflatoxin control in Uganda, is implemented by FRA through a grant funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Feed the Future Uganda Institutional and Systems Strengthening Activity.

Ms. Agnes Kirabo, Executive Director of FRA, emphasized the importance of the campaign. "The country needs to ensure that all actors are very cautious about the risks that aflatoxin contamination brings to health but also to trade," said Ms. Kirabo. "We are looking at raising civic consciousness and the competency to engage in best practices to reduce and control aflatoxin levels."

The campaign aims to engage stakeholders along the value chain, including farmers, aggregators, processors, transporters, traders, consumers, and policymakers on aflatoxin control and management. By addressing the root causes of aflatoxin contamination and promoting proper harvesting and storage practices, the campaign aims to safeguard public health and preserve Uganda's market share within the region.

For media inquiries and further information, please contact:

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