



VAT Simplifying the collection of Tax.

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

SUPERMARKETS, BANKS, LUCELEC VAT EDUCATION CAMPAIGN ADD VALUE

Castries, ST. LUCIA, September – A collaborative approach between the business sector and the VAT Implementation Project Office is facilitating optimal consumer education as the country prepares for the implementation of the Value Added Tax effective October 1.

In the next two weeks reinforcement methods will be launched to boost consumers' knowledge on the full scope of the basket of goods, with the use of visual presentations at everyday points of sale.

The country's leading Supermarket chain Consolidated Foods Ltd (CFL), as well as GL Foodmarket have responded with eagerness to a call from the VAT Project Office to dialogue and best approaches to make relevant and specific information available at points of sale, which consumers will need for their purchasing decisions. Coming out of these consultations CFL has decided to implement a colour coded sticker system which will tag all goods that will have not VAT. CFL will also place posters prominently at their supermarkets with the colour codes fully explained so that customers know to simply look out for the "No VAT on this item" sticker.

GL Foodmarket and M&C Pharmacies, along with Ultra Mart, Glace Supermarkets, Dilly's Supermarket and Eroline's in Soufriere will use NO VAT shelf wobblers for prominent display on shelves carrying zero-rated or exempt items. Efforts are being made to conclude on a similar arrangement with other community marts.

From the month of August, the VAT Office has expanded its information distribution network with the support of three of the country's financial institutions, CIBC First Caribbean International Bank, East Caribbean Financial Holdings and the Bank of Nova Scotia. The General Post Office in Castries and LUCELEC readily undertook to function as outlets for the distribution of educational material placed to facilitate both visibility and easy access by Saint Lucians as they go about everyday life.

"In particular, these institutions have clients and customers themselves, and we are gratified at the level of interest they are showing in ensuring that their own customers are prepared," said VAT Coordinator, Adria Sonson.

The VAT Project Office has been satisfied with the level of involvement of local supermarkets in being proactive in this regard. Throughout this month, the VAT Project Office has been focusing

its extensive consumer education in the communities of Dennery and Vieux Fort, having covered the length and breadth of Choiseul, Laborie and Micoud communities, as well as through churches and other community based groups.

The VAT Implementation Project Office has also been meeting directly with businesses and commercially oriented associations to engage both their membership and employees to demystify aspects relevant to VAT and business operations.

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