

*By Jeje Muhinde;*

Meat traders in the city of Kigali have been warned to stop jacking up prices without any significant reason.

In a statement released on Thursday, June 2, 2022, the Rwanda Inspectorate, Competition and Consumer Protection Authority (RICA) issued a warning notice saying that traders who are found guilty will face stiff penalties.

“Based on inspections carried out in the city of Kigali, we have noticed that some traders and wholesalers are unreasonably hiking up prices of meat at the expense of consumers,” the statement read.

The consumer inspectorate authority, has warned that “opportunistic” traders and wholesalers If found guilty would be penalized under the law.

Prices of beef at market have skyrocketed up to Rwf 2900 from Rwf 2700 a kilogram. At the butcher, the price has risen up to Rwf 3500 from Rwf 3200 respectively.

Meat traders say there is shortage of livestock because farmers now prefer selling their produce instead of animals or chicken.

Alphonse Kwizera a livestock trader in Eastern Province says meat prices have been increasing mainly because there is shortage of livestock; farmers are not willing to sell their animals.

“The rise in fuel prices is also causing a spike in prices of everyday items which has made life unbearable. Track drivers who are transporting the animals from Nyagatare to Kigali are charging higher prices” he adds

Slaughterhouses and butcheries in Kigali have claimed that the spike in prices is also due to a shortage of meat.

Last month, slaughterhouse operators were told to comply with the required standards of RICA in order to continue operating.

“We were given a grace period of only three months to upgrade to the required safety and quality standards, if not we face closure. So this clampdown has triggered a shortage of meat since some of us are focused on upgrading” said Usufe

Musafiri, an abattoir owner in Bannyahe in Kigali.

According to Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB), Rwanda produced 185,989 tonnes of meat in 2021.

Over the country exports 670,287 Kilogrammes of meat in total every year.

The meat is exported to DRC, Congo Brazzaville, and Gabon as well as Asian and European countries such as Qatar, and Oman among others.