

Dear Dr. Kenneth Jacobs,

South Africa may become one of the few countries in the world to tax natural sugar in fruit juice. Introducing a sugar tax on 100% fruit juice on natural sugar will have massive consequences on sugar farmers. The Consumer Goods Council has raised concerns regarding the sugar tax impacts and highlighted unintended consequences of job losses within the agricultural sector in particular the sugar cane farmers that were seriously affected during the July 2021 riots. This will certainly be a double blow on this sector.

In previous years, government has levied sugar tax on various sweetened drinks targeting the source of these products harm, it also gives beverages manufactures an incentive to reduce the sugar content of their products. South Africa intention was to put the health of the public in first place. Government has however failed to capitalize on these gains and use such revenues for health promotion. To date, the Health Committee has failed to produce a report that demonstrates on how tax levied, has addressed health challenges, such as diabetes and obesity, in South Africa.

I would therefore like to request a debate on the taxing of 100% fruit juice.

As much as there is a need to incentives a healthier lifestyle and encourage companies to reduce the amounts of sugars in their products, we cannot make healthy items with natural sugars such as 100% fruit juice unaffordable. South Africans are already struggling with high prices across the board.

I look forward to your response.

Regards,

Michele Clarke, MP