

Johannesburg Court says alt meat can use meaty word

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The Johannesburg High Court in South Africa has made a ruling in favour of plant-based meat alternatives that are marketed using "meat-like" terms. In June 2022, South Africa's Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) banned the use of meat-like terms on plant-based product labels, claiming that it was misleading to consumers.

The department instructed the Food Safety Agency to seize any non-compliant products. However, plant-based advocates took the case to the Johannesburg High Court and were successful in arguing that plant-based meat alternatives were not covered by legislation relating to the classification and labelling of processed meats.

The court temporarily halted the planned seizure of the products in August 2022 and then halted it again for an indefinite period following a victory in court for the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA). After a review, the decision to seize the meat alternatives has been overturned altogether, with the court concluding that it is not legally enforceable. As a result, these products will now remain permanently available in the country.