COMPETITION AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS AUTHORITY

Market Inspection Report

CSI Market, Changzamtog

1. Background

The inspection was initiated after a comment was posted on the official Facebook page of CCAA raising concerns about expired products at CSI Market, Changzamtog. The comment also questioned whether the monitoring and oversight mechanisms in place were adequate to prevent expired products from being displayed or sold to consumers.

In response, CCAA inspected the market on 9 November 2026 to verify the reported concerns and to assess the operator's compliance with applicable consumer protection requirements.

2. CSI Market and Business Operations

CSI Market was established by the Cottage and Small Industry Promotion Division (CSIPD), Department of Industry (DoI). Operation of the market is awarded to business operators through open competitive tendering for a period of five years.

The current operator is Druksell Private Limited. The premises comprise two main sections: a retail section selling groceries, general merchandise and alcoholic beverages, and a cafeteria.

During the inspection, the business initially presented an e-commerce business licence. Subsequent verification with CSIPD confirmed that Druksell Private Limited holds valid licences for its operations at CSI Market.

3. Inspection Findings

The inspection team examined the products displayed and offered for sale in the grocery and general merchandise sections and recorded the following observations.

3.1 Display of Expired Products

The team identified noodles that had passed their expiry dates but were still displayed for sale. The products are listed in Table I.

Table I: Expired products displayed for sale

Sl. No.	Product name	Quantity	Unit price (Nu.)	Total (Nu.)
1	Pumpkin Noodles and Japan Rice Noodles	14	100	1,400
	Total	**14**		**1,400**

3.2 Inadequate or Incomplete Product Labelling

The team also identified products with inadequate or incomplete labelling. Some did not indicate an expiry date, while others lacked a manufacturing date. The products are listed in Table II.

Table II: Products with inadequate or incomplete labelling

Sl. No.	Product name	Quantity	Unit price (Nu.)	Total (Nu.)
1	Premium Buckwheat Noodles and Corn Pasta	26	250	6,500
2	Pumpkin Pasta	26	100	2,600
3	Matsutake Soup	4	500	2,000
4	Ntt Rice Noodles	2	120	240
5	KDY (Yellow Dock Root Tea)	1	320	320
6	Quinoa Noodles	4	180	720
7	Home Made Rattan Shoot Pickle	1	200	200
	Total	**64**		**12,580**

4. Compliance Assessment

Beyond the products on display, the team assessed the operator's practices against key consumer protection requirements and service standards. The results are summarised below and detailed in Sections 4.1 to 4.6.

Summary of compliance assessment

Area assessed	Observation	Status
Business licence	E-commerce licence presented on site; CSIPD subsequently confirmed that valid licences are held for operations at CSI Market.	Verified
Expiry of products (3.1)	14 units of noodles displayed for sale beyond their expiry dates.	Non-compliant
Product labelling (3.2, 4.2)	Seven product lines (64 units) lacked a manufacturing date and/or an expiry date.	Non-compliant
Purchase receipts and GST (4.1)	Receipts issued; business registered for GST and charging 5%.	Compliant
Weighing devices (4.3)	Weighing machine calibrated by BSB; certificate valid until March 2027.	Compliant
Price display and fair treatment (4.4)	Prices clearly displayed and consistent with prices charged; no discriminatory practices observed.	Compliant
Complaint handling (4.5)	Contact details displayed; complaint records reported; staff broadly aware of procedures.	Satisfactory
Refund, return and exchange policies (4.5)	Policies reported to exist, but no documentary evidence produced and none displayed.	Improvement needed
Online marketing (4.6)	Business accounts maintained on Facebook, TikTok and Instagram.	Noted

4.1 Issuance of Purchase Receipts

The business issues purchase receipts to customers and thereby maintains a record of transactions. It is also registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) with the Department of Revenue and Customs (DRC) and collects GST at 5% from customers.

4.2 Product Labelling

The team examined the labels of products on display to assess their conformity with applicable labelling requirements. Several products were found to be inadequately or incompletely labelled, mainly because a manufacturing date, an expiry date, or both were absent (see Table II). This points to a need for stronger product verification and monitoring before goods are placed on display.

4.3 Weighing and Measuring Devices

The weighing machine in use had been calibrated by the Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB). Its calibration certificate is valid until March 2027, so the device was within its calibration validity period at the time of inspection.

4.4 Price Display, Price Consistency and Fair Treatment of Consumers

Prices of goods were clearly displayed, and the prices charged to consumers were consistent with those displayed. The team did not identify any discriminatory practices in the treatment of consumers.

4.5 Complaint Handling and Refund, Return and Exchange Policies

A documented complaint-handling protocol and refund, return and exchange policies are not strictly mandated by consumer protection law. They are, however, recognised good practice that every reputable business is expected to have, and CCAA strongly encourages them.

The operator's complaint-handling mechanism was assessed against three indicators: display of complaint contact details, maintenance of a complaint register, and staff awareness of complaint procedures. Complaint contact details were displayed on the signboards. Business representatives stated that records of complaints received are maintained, and staff generally showed a basic awareness of the applicable procedures.

Business representatives also stated that refund, return and exchange policies are in place, but no documentary evidence of them was produced during the inspection. Without documented and visibly displayed policies, consumers may be unaware of the terms and procedures for seeking a refund, return or exchange.

4.6 Online and Digital Marketing

CSI Market, operated by Druksell Private Limited, maintains business accounts under the name “CSI Market” on Facebook, TikTok and Instagram. These platforms are used to promote the market’s products and services.

5. Actions Taken

Based on the findings, the following corrective and advisory actions were taken:

1. **Referral to BFDA.** The lists of expired products and of products with inadequate or incomplete labelling were compiled and forwarded to the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) for review, guidance and appropriate action.

2. **Advice on product labelling.** The operator was advised to strengthen its labelling verification practices and to ensure that all products displayed for sale meet the applicable labelling requirements.
3. **Advice on refund, return and exchange policies.** The operator was advised to establish these policies and display them at visible locations within the premises, so that consumers are informed of their rights and the applicable procedures.

6. Recommendations

CSI Market is one of the Ministry's flagship initiatives. Established to promote locally made cottage and small industries, it is expected to demonstrate high standards of product quality, retail management and customer service, and to serve as a model for other retailers.

The inspection found compliance in several operational areas, but also identified scope for improvement in expiry monitoring, labelling verification and consumer information. CCAA therefore recommends that the operator:

1. **Strengthen expiry-date monitoring and stock management.** Establish and consistently apply a systematic mechanism for checking expiry dates. Conduct regular stock inspections, and immediately remove expired products from shelves and segregate them from saleable stock so that they cannot be sold accidentally.
2. **Ensure compliance with labelling requirements.** Check the completeness and accuracy of labels before products are accepted into stock or displayed. Withhold products with inadequate or incomplete labels from sale until the deficiencies are addressed in accordance with applicable requirements.
3. **Enhance internal monitoring and accountability.** Strengthen internal monitoring and inventory management through regular inspections, proper stock rotation and clear assignment of responsibilities to designated staff, to prevent expired or inadequately labelled products from being displayed again.
4. **Formalise and display refund, return and exchange policies.** Document these policies and display them prominently within the premises, setting out the applicable conditions and procedures clearly so that consumers can make informed decisions.
5. **Maintain continuous compliance monitoring.** Institute periodic internal compliance checks covering product quality, labelling, pricing, consumer information and customer service, to sustain compliance and reinforce CSI Market's role as a model retail establishment.

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