

ACCREDITATION: IMPROVING FOOD SAFETY



World Accreditation Day is a global initiative established by ILAC and IAF to promote the value of accreditation. The Theme for this year is “Accreditation: Improving food safety. C celebrated worldwide on 9 June 2020, the theme highlights the role of accreditation in improving food safety.

Accreditation has a crystal-clear objective: it aims to assure businesses, end users and regulators that a conformity assessment body (CAB), such as a testing, calibration or medical laboratory, certification or inspection body, has the required technical competence and operates impartially. This competence is assessed by accreditation bodies against international standards and requirements.

Simply applied to food, accreditation helps improve food safety. Building on World Accreditation Day 2019 which highlighted the role of accreditation in adding value to supply chains, the 2020 World Accreditation Day spotlights accreditation’s role in improving food safety.

It does this across the whole of the food supply chain from farm to fork, through food production, processing and packaging, storage and transportation, to retail and catering, helping build layers of assurance in the supply chain.

Accreditation bodies assess CABs in a variety of different key functions, assessing them against standards which have been developed by the global community through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and International Electro technical Commission (IEC). These standards cover functions such as inspection, certification and testing. With inspection bodies, certification bodies and laboratories accredited to these standards, they have been independently checked as being able to deliver competent and impartial inspection, certification and testing services in all parts of local, national and international food chains.

In April 2019, a Joint Statement issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), highlighted the toll on humans of foodborne diseases. Accreditation aims to help support the reduction of these incidences through enhancing the performance of organizations in the food supply chain. Accreditation is used across the globe to help meet this goal: from the use of accredited certification in Australia through the PrimeSafe scheme for meat and seafood supply; to the European Union using the accreditation of laboratories to support food security in Europe; to accredited inspection to help commercial catering establishments deliver safer food in France.

World Accreditation Day 2020 whose theme is Accreditation Improving Food Safety, sets out to illustrate how in just the one area, food safety, accreditation contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 3 of Good Health and Well-Being. World Accreditation Day 2020 comes just two days after the second ever World Food Safety Day which aims to highlight the need for safe food <https://www.who.int/news-room/initiatives/world-food-safety-day-2020>. Through accreditation bodies and subsequently accredited certification bodies, inspection bodies and laboratories, the conformity assessment community continuously strives to help deliver safer food.

World Accreditation Day 2020 enables the International Accreditation Forum (www.iaf.nu), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (www.ilac.org) and their members to highlight how accreditation is improving food safety. IAF and ILAC provide a range of information to explain accreditation's role in improving food safety, including further illustrations of its use <https://publicsectorassurance.org/topic-areas/food-safety-agriculture/>

The Southern African Development Community Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA) is a Regional Cooperation whose objective is to coordinate accreditation activities in the region and facilitate the national, regional and international recognition and acceptance of SADC accreditation infrastructure and providing member States with accreditation as a tool for facilitating trade and the protection of health and safety of the public and the environment in both the voluntary and regulatory areas.

SADCA currently comprises of a total of 24 Members: 3 Arrangement Members (MRA Signatories); 13 Ordinary Members; and 8 Stakeholder Members. SADCA comprises of 4 accreditation body members namely: the Angolan Institute of Accreditation (IAAC); the Mauritius Accreditation Service (MAURITAS); Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service(SADCAS); and the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) with SADCAS being a multi economy accreditation body servicing the accreditation needs of 14 SADC Member States namely: Angola; Botswana; Comoros; Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); Eswatini; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mozambique; Namibia; Seychelles; Tanzania; Zambia; and Zimbabwe whilst MAURITAS and SANAS service Mauritius and South Africa respectively. Although Angola has launched its national accreditation body and Zambia has indicated its intention to establish a national accreditation body, both these national accreditation bodies are not yet operational let alone achieved international recognition hence conformity assessment bodies in these countries will continue to be serviced by SADCAS in the foreseeable future.

For more information please visit your accreditation body's website

www.mauritas.org

www.sadcas.org

www.sanas.co.za

OR

Contact

The National Accreditation Focal Point in your country

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