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SOCIAL AUDITS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT

The future of farm certification begins.

SIZA was showcased by their new partner, GLOBALG.A.P. in a mutual press conference during the Fruit Logistica conference in Berlin.

The conference focused on “The Future of Farm Certification”. This is an issue of growing international relevance, as demonstrated by the rising number of GLOBALG.A.P. members adopting the GRASP social audit. Its worldwide footprint has more than doubled with an increase of 116%.

Pioneering optimal ways of farm certification, SIZA sets social standards in South Africa and ensures compliance with a range of international trade requirements. “SIZA enables the South African agricultural sector to become a global leader in sustainable, ethical trade, and environmental stewardship,” said Anton Rabe, Director of SIZA.

The partnership with GLOBALG.A.P. was a great achievement for the South African initiative. Rabe explains: “GLOBALG.A.P. acknowledges the SIZA audits as one of the accepted programmes with their compliance requirements, so we can reduce duplication for our members. Our partnership with GLOBALG.A.P. allows us to display the SIZA audit and required information in the GLOBALG.A.P. database, so that clients can review the status of all their South African suppliers via the GGN search and bookmarking functions in one place.”

For more information, please contact Retha Louw: retha@siza.co.za



SIZA GRASP COMPLIANCE: PARTNERSHIP WITH GLOBALG.A.P.

How does this work in practice?

The partnership with GLOBALG.A.P. allows us to display the SIZA audit and required information in the GLOBALG.A.P. database, so that retailers can review the status of all their South African growers via the GGN search and bookmarking functions in one place.

SIZA can update the information in the database once a month. Therefore, if you would like to be listed in the GlobalG.A.P. database, please inform the SIZA office (info@siza.co.za) so that we can add your information to the list. Take note: you must be an active member of SIZA to be included in the GlobalG.A.P. database.

Export companies should send their updated supplier lists through to SIZA (info@siza.co.za) no later than the 20th of each month.

SIZA AUDIT FREQUENCY MATRIX

The SIZA ethical programme subscribes to being improvement-led rather than audit-led and uses the SIZA Audit Frequency Matrix to support this position. To date it comprised four categories of risk (A, B, C, and D) where category A had the most stringent qualifying criteria (i.e., a five-year audit period).

Agriculture is a rapidly changing environment and therefore it was decided that from the 1st of May 2017, the audit frequency categories will change to Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze, where Platinum will no longer be a five-year audit period, but a three-year audit period. (The SIZA Audit Frequency Matrix is available on the SIZA website for review - www.siza.co.za)

Previously allocated audit periods will not be affected and will remain as is. Remember that the SIZA Audit Frequency Matrix is an indication, but if the market you supply has different specifications, you have to adhere to their requirements.

SIZA has various activities and actions in place to mitigate and manage risk. While a third party audit is an important component of this, it is the activities between audits that support sustainable improvement. Therefore please remember that you have to renew your membership and update your SAQ annually.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS ON THE SIZA PLATFORM

Each grower should implement all corrective actions on his/her profile on the SIZA Platform after an audit. No audit confirmation letters will be issued if all corrective actions were not performed by the grower and signed off by the auditor. Please do not email corrective actions to the auditors, growers have to upload the CA's on the Platform.

Also take note that the "comment box" provided on the Platform should only be used for clarifications, notes or additional information to the corrective actions. Auditors will not accept these notes as corrective actions – proof of their implementation must still be uploaded.



SIZA MEMBERSHIP

Remember that your membership with SIZA needs to be renewed annually on/before the anniversary date that you registered with SIZA for the very first time.

When you renew your membership, you need to do three things:

1. Log on to your profile and pay your membership fee. **Please remember to send proof of payment to info@siza.co.za**
2. Copy your SAQ (self-assessment questionnaire) from the previous year to your profile so that you can update your information, etc.
3. Submit the SAQ for review so that we at the SIZA have it on record. The “submit” button is in the right hand corner at the bottom of the page.

Your profile will only be active once you have completed these three steps.

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ANUALLY?

Although you are allocated a Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze status after an audit (which is valid for two or three years), you must renew your membership and update your self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) annually. One of the conditions of the two to three-year audit period is that SIZA must monitor whether members maintain ethical practices and standards during that time. SIZA must also review the updated SAQ annually to see if anything changed on a farm during the specified period. If membership is not renewed and the SAQ not updated annually, visibility on the SIZA, Sedex and Global GAP Database will be compromised and the audit confirmation letter will not be validated anymore.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR SIZA MEMBERSHIP?

Your SIZA membership give you visibility on the SIZA-, Sedex Platform and the GlobalG.A.P. database. SIZA manages your profile on Sedex, therefore you need not register and pay for a personal profile or membership with Sedex.

From 1 April 2017, the fees to be a member of SIZA are as follows:

Level	Category	Cost (excl. VAT)
1a	Producers	R 960
1b	Producer/pack house	R 1 050
2	Pack houses	R 1 300
3a	Exporters	R 2 000
3b	Multi-sites 2 – 6	R 960 per site
3b	Multi-sites 7 – 10	R 6500 plus R960 for each additional site after 10 sites
4	Importer/agent	R 6 500
5a	Retailers	R 10 000
5b	Major industry associations	R 30 000
5c	Minor industry associations	R 10 000
6	Not-for-Profit Organisation	R 1 500
7	Audit bodies	R 3 000



SIZA ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE

INCLUSION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR OF SUSTAINABILITY

In support of the longer-term SIZA vision to include environmental stewardship as an integral offering within sustainability, WWF-SA has been collaborating with SIZA to firstly develop and then incorporate the assurance of minimal environmental compliance and good practice. This is part of an integrated social and environmental sustainability assurance programme, aimed at servicing the South African fruit and fresh produce sectors.

WWF-SA has developed an **environmental performance assessment (EPA) tool** to help growers evaluate their current compliance and environmental risks, both at a farm and regional/catchment level. This process is accomplished through the completion of a self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) with a risk-prioritising filter. The results feed into an integrated improvement plan and farm environmental management plan and monitoring system. The reporting function, comprised of the improvement plan and progress tracker, can be used to report on tailored environmental sustainability measures, both internally to guide business decision making, and/or to retailers as part of meeting market requirements. The EPA includes questions ranging from minimum legal requirements to leading practice across four main topics – water, soil, energy & materials, and farm ecosystems – and has been benchmarked against the leading international standards (GlobalG.A.P.'s IFA Version 5, GSCP, Leaf, Nurture, Woolworths Farming for the Future, Sedex and SAI FSA). Its aim is merging multiple market requirements into one home-grown tool.

What can you expect?

The WWF team is working with the SIZA Board to formalise the integration of the environmental assurance system within the existing SIZA structure, the first stage of which will be the online version of the EPA tool on the SIZA Platform by the end of 2017. The updated version of the EPA tool will be available in Excel format for anyone to use from the end of March and WWF will be running awareness and technical training workshops to assist interested fruit industry members (growers, exporters, consultants, extension officers, etc.) from April to November 2017. For more information, contact the WWF project co-ordinator Shelly Fuller (021) 881 3073 or sfuller@wwf.org.za.

For help and assistance on the SIZA Platform:

SIZA helpline: Lynn Taute, Tel 086 1111 568

Email: info@siza.co.za

