

## Directorate: Food Control

### Objective:

The Directorate: Food Control ensures an optimal non-personal preventative primary health care service in respect of the safety of food for the South African community based on basic needs and the right to make informed choices without being misled by means of scientifically founded legislation, auditing and information actions.

### Functions of the Directorate

The main functions of the Directorate: Food Control, *inter alia*, include:

- Administer, compile and publish legislation relating to food safety, food labelling and related matters.
- Initiate, coordinate and evaluate general as well as more specific food monitoring programmes.
- Audit and support provinces and local authorities with food law enforcement.
- Inform, educate and communicate (IEC) food safety and related matters to stakeholders such as industry, consumers and other departments.
- Act as the national contact point for the joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission.
- Evaluate agricultural remedies and chemicals and food produced by means of biotechnology.

### Food legislation

The Directorate: Food Control administers those parts of the following Acts that relate to food:

#### **Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act No 54 of 1972)**

This Act addresses the manufacture, sale and importation of foodstuffs. Authorised local authorities in their areas of jurisdiction enforce it. Food import control is conducted by the Port Health Services of the Provincial Health Departments on behalf of the national Department of Health. The Act does not require the issuing of food import permits by South Africa or of certification by exporting countries. Food is detained by Customs and Excise for clearance by port health and may be inspected, sampled and analysed. Entry into the country can be denied if the food is not in compliance with the requirements of the Act.

#### **The Health Act, 1977 (Act No 63 of 1977)**

Regulations related to the hygienic handling of food and the inspection of, *inter alia*, food premises published under this Act are also enforced by local authorities in their areas of jurisdiction.

#### **The International Health Regulations Act, 1974 (Act No 28 of 1974)**

This Act provides for the approval by the Department of Health of the source of food for consumption at ports, airports, on vessels and on aircraft, as well as for the inspection of such premises and the sampling of food by local authorities. The provincial health departments currently approve premises on behalf of the national Department of Health.

#### **Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act 54 of 1972)**

(The Act can be obtained from Lex Patria Publishers, Tel: +27 11 784 6373)

The following regulations are included under the Act:

- Jam, conserve, marmalade and jelly, R. 2627/1986
- Emulsifiers, stabilisers and thickeners and the amounts thereof that foodstuffs may contain, R. 2527/1987
- Tolerances for fungus-produced toxins in foodstuffs, R. 313/1990
- Perishable foodstuffs - definition and declaration of certain perishable foodstuffs, R. 952/1999
- Radio activity in foodstuffs, R. 1931/1990

- Baking powder and chemical leavening substances, R. 2486/1990
- Composition and labelling of raw boerewors, raw species sausage and raw mixed species sausage, R. 2718/1990
- Prohibiting guar gum as a foodstuff, R. 2554/1991
- Use of sweeteners in foodstuffs, R. 3128/1991
- Maximum limits for veterinary medicine and stock remedy residues that may be present in foodstuffs, R. 1809/1992
- Herbs and spices, R. 1468/1993
- Labelling and advertising of foodstuffs, R. 2034/1993
- Maximum limits for pesticide residues that may be present in foodstuffs, R. 246/1994
- Metals in foodstuffs, R. 1518/1994
- Salt, R. 996/1995
- Enforcement by local authorities, R. 382/1996
- Food colourants, R. 1008/1996
- Edible fats and oils, R. 1316/1996
- Microbiological standards for foodstuffs and related matters, R. 692/1997
- Anti-caking agents – amounts that may be used in foodstuffs, R. 2507/1982
- Preservatives and antioxidants, R. 965/1977
- Irradiated foodstuffs, R. 1600/1983
- Duties of inspectors and analysts, R. 2162/1973
- Soft drinks, R. 1769/1985
- Mayonnaise and other salad dressings, R. 92/1986
- Milk and dairy products, R. 1555/1997
- Enrichment of maize meal, R. 2839/1979
- Mineral hydrocarbons in foodstuffs, R. 230/1977
- Sea food, R. 2064/1973
- Tolerances for certain seeds in certain agricultural products, R. 1466/1987
- Use of certain food additives in certain wheaten and rye products, R. 1466/1987
- Substances in wine, other fermented beverages and spirits – additives, amounts and tolerances, R. 2870/1981
- Acids, bases and salts – the amounts thereof that foodstuffs may contain, R. 115/1986
- Restriction on the sale of food additives containing nitrite and/or nitrate and other substances, R. 219/1975
- Manufactured or processed meat products, R. 219/1975
- Foodstuffs for infants, young children and children, R. 1130/1984
- Regulations under the Food, Drugs and Disinfectants Act no. 13 of 1929, R. 575/1930:

- Edible gelatine
- Unwholesome or poisonous substances in food
- Ice-cream and ice-cream products
- Meat and fish and their preparations: edible fats and edible oils
- Tea
- Coffee, coffee mixtures and preparations of coffee
- Chicory
- Cocoa and chocolate
- Sugar, confectionary, dextrose and icing sugar

Health Act, 1977 (No. 63 of 1977)

Regulations include:

- General hygiene requirements for food premises and the transport of food (R.918/1999)
- Milking sheds and the transport of milk (R.1256/1986)
- Food and water vessels (Act 36 of 1919, R.1575/1971)

*The International Health Regulations Act, 1974 (Act 28 of 1974):*

This Act provides for the approval by the Department of Health of the source food of food for consumption at ports, airports, on vessels and on aircraft, as well as for the inspection of such premises and the sampling of food by local authorities. The provincial health departments currently approve premises on behalf of the National Department of Health.

**Information documents/material available from the Directorate**

Copies of the following guidelines / reports / training manuals / posters / brochures and pamphlets are available from the Directorate on request:

***Guidelines / training manuals / reports***

- Guidelines for the management and health surveillance of food handlers
- Guidelines for Environmental Health Officers on the interpretation of microbiological analysis data of food
- [Guidelines for Environmental Health Officers engaged in food poisoning investigations \(PDF\)](#)
- Guidelines for Environmental Health Officers in the implementation of the HACCP system
- Guidelines for the health certification of consignments of foodstuffs destined for export to other countries from South Africa
- Guidelines for the food safety control of imported foodstuffs entering South Africa through land ports of entry
- Training manual for Environmental Health Officers on safe practices for street food preparation and handling
- Report on improving street foods in South Africa

***Posters / pamphlets***

- Ten golden rules for safe food preparation (poster available in ten of the local languages and designed for the informal sector)
- Basic principles for the preparation of safe food for infants and young children (available in four of the local languages)
- Safe preparation of chicken and eggs (poster)
- Safe food for all (World Food Day poster)
- The consumer guide to safe food handling (pamphlet)

**Useful links**

***National:***

Department of Agriculture  
Department of Trade and Industry  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
South African Bureau of Standards  
The Agricultural Research Council  
SAAFoST

***International***

The Food and Drug Administration  
The US Department of Agriculture  
The Australia, New Zealand Food Inspection Authority  
The Canadian Food Inspection Agency  
World Trade Organisation

Global Forum for Food Safety Regulators  
International Life Sciences Institute  
WHO  
FAO  
Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (New Zealand)  
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (UK)  
International Food Information Council

## Staff of the Directorate

The Directorate is located on the 16th floor of Hallmark Building, Vermeulen Street, Pretoria. Its facsimile number is +27-12-326 4374.

The **Director** is **Dr T van de Venter** (e-mail: [ventert@health.gov.za](mailto:ventert@health.gov.za)). He is chairperson of the Food Legislation Advisory Group (FLAG) and the National Codex Committee and serves on a number of committees that are relevant to the functions of the Directorate.

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### Sub Directorate: Chemical Safety

The Deputy Director who heads this sub directorate is Ms FWJ Jansen van Rijssen ([vrijsw@health.gov.za](mailto:vrijsw@health.gov.za)). Her specific areas of expertise include food irradiation, food biotechnology and toxicology in general. **Tel: +27 12 312 0154**

Mrs A Casey ([caseya@health.gov.za](mailto:caseya@health.gov.za)) (Assistant Director) is responsible for the allocation of Acceptable Daily Intakes (ADIs) of all agricultural and stock remedies not previously registered in South Africa. Publishing residue limits of agricultural and stock remedies and veterinary drugs in food and the classification of pesticides are also her responsibilities. **Tel: +27 12 312 0155**

Ms M Selematsela ([selemp@health.gov.za](mailto:selemp@health.gov.za)) (Assistant Director) is involved in all aspects of food biotechnology. **Tel: +27 12 312 0157**

Ms M Herbst ([herbsm@health.gov.za](mailto:herbsm@health.gov.za)) (Principal Medical Natural Scientist) is responsible for food additives and contaminants, food standards and ingredients and non-nutritional food labelling. **Tel: +27 12 312 0164**

A Senior Medical Natural Scientist (vacant) is involved in the regulation of agricultural and stock remedies and veterinary drugs in food.

### Sub Directorate: Microbiological Safety and Programme Development

The Deputy Director who heads this Sub Directorate is Mr AWJ Pretorius ([pretoa@health.gov.za](mailto:pretoa@health.gov.za)). He is involved in matters relating to food import and export control, laboratory analyses, the auditing of food law enforcement, the safety of street foods and the authorisation of inspectors and analysts. **Tel: +27 12 312 0159**

Mrs F Makhoane ([makhof@health.gov.za](mailto:makhof@health.gov.za)) is an Assistant Director who is responsible for food hygiene, HACCP and food microbiological standards. **Tel: +27 12 312 0158**

A Medical Natural Scientist (vacant) is responsible for the information, education and communication (IEC) programmes of the Directorate. The duties also include food surveillance and monitoring programmes.

### **Sub Directorate: International and Interagency Liaison**

(Including labelling and nutrition related matters)

The Deputy Director who heads this Sub Directorate is Ms V Carolissen-Mackay ([carolv@health.gov.za](mailto:carolv@health.gov.za)). She is responsible for, amongst others, managing the National Codex Office. **Tel: +27 12 312 1067**

The Assistant Director in this Sub Directorate is Mrs A Booyzen ([booyza@health.gov.za](mailto:booyza@health.gov.za)). She is responsible for nutritional food labelling. **Tel: +27 12 312 0163**

### **Administrative Support Section**

The Senior Administrative Officer in charge is Ms M Sinclair ([sinclm@health.gov.za](mailto:sinclm@health.gov.za)) **Tel: +27 12 312 0160**

### **National and International Liaison**

For the purposes of its regulatory activities, the Directorate is advised by the Food Legislative Advisory Group (FLAG). This non-statutory body is composed of representatives of academic and research institutions, the food industry, consumer and professional organisations, other government departments and provincial health authorities.

The Directorate also plays an active role on committees and bodies such as:

- The joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission
- The South African Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee
- The Interdepartmental Committee for the Safe-guarding of Humans against Poisons
- The Market Access and Regulatory Working Group of the Agricultural Committee of the US-SA Binational Commission
- The Veterinary Products Policy Committee, the Veterinary Clinical Committee and the Complementary Medicines Committee of the Medicines Control Council
- The International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI)
- The Food Advisory Consumer Service (FACS)
- The Pretoria Technikon Advisory Committees for the National Diplomas in Environmental Health and Food Technology
- The Inter-provincial Port Health Committee

## **Events**

### ***Training seminar on monitoring of iodine in table salt***

The monitoring of levels of iodine in table salt as prescribed by the Regulations on Salt published under the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act 54 of 1972) is a very important component of the programme of the Department of Health to eradicate iodine deficiency disorders (IDDs) in the South African population. UNICEF has been supporting the Department in its efforts to attain universal salt iodation and is providing technical assistance in this regard.

The Department has embarked on a capacity building programme for Environmental Health Officers employed by provinces and local authorities who are involved in the monitoring programme related to this aspect through the presentation of a training seminar during which the following aspects are focused on:

- Epidemiological aspects of IDD

- Role and responsibilities of the various role players involved in the salt iodation programme
- Overview of the contents and application of relevant legislation
- Background and overview of monitoring of the iodine content of salt
- Practical aspects of monitoring and promoting the iodine content of salt
- Information, education and communication aspects

The Directorates: Food Control and Nutrition in collaboration with UNICEF and MRC will be presenting the last in a series of training seminars for EHO's from the Western and Eastern Cape Provinces on 5 December 2001 at Wilderness Resort Hotel (Attendance is by invitation only)