



Dairy Standard Agency Statutory Projects for Milk SA, 2025

(PRJ-0406-2025)

Dairy Standard Agency

Quarter 4 2025 (October 2025 till December 2025)

Project goals

Goal 1 - National monitoring of milk and other dairy products in collaboration with Health Authorities

Achievements

PROJECT 1: NATIONAL MILK MONITORING PROGRAM IN COLLABORATION WITH HEALTH AUTHORITIES

Through Project 1.1 monitoring, the DSA actively engages in sample collection from targeted regions, ensuring representative coverage. This approach provides access to milk from specific areas, enabling comprehensive analysis and supporting risk-based monitoring across the industry.

The sample run activities (cycle 94) for this quarter was completed as per schedule and the number of samples per product is indicated in Table 1 below. The product scope for cycle 94 was milk (raw and pasteurised) and extend shelf life milk.

Table 1 Number of samples per product collected

Fresh Milk (A-D)	Products (E-K)	Total
26	13	39
A	Milk (Packed Pasteurised)	26
B	Milk (Packed Unpasteurised)	0
C	Milk (Bulk Pasteurised)	0
D	Milk (Bulk Unpasteurised)	0
E	Milk (ESL)	1
F	Milk (UHT)	12

During Cycle 94, samples from top 30 processing facilities were collected and analysed. Due to budget limitation, the focus was to sample products from these top 30 processors, with higher risk.

The samples obtained during this cycle were submitted to the DSA Laboratory Services, following established standard procedures. The test results pertaining to milk were benchmarked against legal standards in the domains of food safety, compositional analysis, and trade metrology. These standards respectively fall under the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics, and Disinfectants Act of 1972 (Act 54 of 1972), the Agricultural Product Standards Act of 1990 (Act 119 of 1990), and the Legal Metrology Act of 2014 (Act 9 of 2014).

Food safety non-conforming results obtained, were assessed, and communicated to the participating

municipal health authorities for further action. Contact details of participating authorities as well as processors were updated as per standard procedure.

The DSA, in terms of its project protocol and relationships with the relevant authorities (see project 6), continued to liaise with the relevant law enforcement bodies, providing support through dairy technical information and guideline documents to limit the sale of non-conforming products.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 2 - Handling of quality problems in respect of product compliance with legal standards

Achievements

PROJECT 2: HANDLING OF INDUSTRY-RELATED PROBLEMS WITH RESPECT TO PROBLEM-COMPLIANCE WITH LEGAL STANDARDS

Under Project 2, one low-risk complaint was received. Background checks have been completed, and a follow-up investigation will take place during the next cycle, as logistical constraints caused by the foot-and-mouth disease outbreak prevent immediate action.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 3 - Special investigations

Achievements

PROJECT 3: SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

Aflatoxin M1 Analysis - 2025/Q4 - cycle 94

Aflatoxin M1, previously classified as a special investigation, has now been incorporated into routine screening. This change enables the DSA to collect extensive data, identify high-risk areas, and implement targeted remedial actions. Prioritisation based on data trends strengthens food safety and compliance across the industry.

During the fourth quarter of 2025, Aflatoxin M1 testing was done on all products collected. A total of 26 samples were examined to ascertain their compliance with the legal limits outlined in the regulations governing tolerances for fungus-produced toxins, as stipulated in the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act of 1972 (Act No. 54 of 1972).

None of 26 samples exceeded the established permissible limit of 50 ppt for Aflatoxin M1.

Labelling and advertising on dairy product packaging

The DSA **provides comprehensive support** on legal labelling requirements, particularly for new entrants to the market. During milk sampling in collaboration with authorities, each sample undergoes a detailed label review. Labels are digitally captured and assessed for compliance with regulations from the Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, and Metrology standards. Testing for composition is a powerful way to validate labelling accuracy and ensure compliance with regulatory standards. It also helps identify inconsistencies that could point to quality or process issues.

During the 4th quarter of 2025, a total of 14 label-related queries were received from various clients. The majority of queries pertained to labelling regulations, product-specific labelling requirements, and preservative information, while a smaller number required full label evaluations.

Feedback was provided promptly, primarily via e-mail, with one query addressed via WhatsApp. Full evaluation reports were generated for two products, and all other queries were resolved through direct advisory communication. These actions ensured that clients remained informed of regulatory requirements and best practices for labelling compliance.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 4 - Milk and other dairy product risk identification

Achievements

PROJECT 4: RISK IDENTIFICATION THROUGH STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

During quarter four of 2025, a dairy product sampling programme was conducted across multiple South African provinces focusing on products manufactured by the **top 30 dairy processors** in the country. The sampling covered pasteurised, UHT and ESL milk in various packaging formats and volumes. Overall, the results demonstrated good microbiological and compositional quality, with **all samples testing negative for target pathogens**, indicating no immediate public health risk.

UHT and cultured dairy products showed consistently low indicator counts and strong compliance, while most pasteurised milk samples also met acceptable limits. A small number of pasteurised milk samples exhibited elevated hygiene indicator counts, suggesting isolated post-processing or cold-chain challenges rather than widespread non-compliance. In general, the findings indicate a **high level of compliance and effective quality control among the top 30 dairy processors**, with ongoing monitoring recommended to address isolated deviations.

4.1 Reporting of results to health authorities

Reports on non-conforming results were forwarded to the respective government departments at the end of each cycle. Each participating municipality received a quarterly report on the analysis of all samples submitted. Non-conforming processors as well as processors whose contact details were verified and who requested to receive test results were provided with individual test reports.

4.2 Software development

Recent developments and ongoing projects in the realm of information technology and software development within the Dairy Standard Agency (DSA):

a. Upgrades to the current Management Information System (MIS):

All platforms were updated with Net8 to ensure development support from Microsoft for the next 2 years.

b. Updates to the laboratory program:

All reports were updated to SANAS standard.

c. Upgrades to the DSA Audit application:

The audit application software upgrade was completed, and deployment finalised. New criteria content was loaded to support and extend sustainability platform.

Ongoing initiatives in IT and software development underscore the DSA's commitment to continuously improve its technological infrastructure and systems. These upgrades and developments are essential for maintaining efficiency, data accuracy, and compliance across various aspects of the operations. The DSA will continue to monitor and report on the progress of these projects in future updates.

4.3 National and international food safety and recall monitoring

During the fourth quarter of 2025, food safety alerts continued to highlight persistent and emerging risks within the dairy sector, particularly associated with raw and unpasteurised milk products. International alerts were predominantly linked to microbiological hazards, with **Listeria monocytogenes**, **E. coli**, **Campylobacter**, and **Salmonella** featuring prominently across a range of cheeses, raw milk, and fermented dairy products originating mainly from the United States and Canada. Several alerts involved raw milk cheeses, reinforcing the ongoing vulnerability of these products to pathogen contamination when control measures are inadequate or inconsistently applied.

In addition to biological hazards, a notable incident involving a **foreign object** in a drinking yoghurt and another related to **chemical contamination (cleaning agents)** in liquid milk underscore the importance of continuing to address prerequisite programmes, including equipment sanitation, foreign body control, and verification of cleaning processes. Collectively, these alerts emphasise the continued need for strict adherence to food safety management systems, effective monitoring of critical control points, and proactive communication throughout the supply chain to protect consumers and maintain confidence in dairy products, not only on the international front but also in South Africa.

(Focus: Dairy Sector, DSA Monitoring & International Alerts)

The Dairy Standard Agency (DSA) continued to play a key role in identifying, monitoring, and communicating food safety risks affecting South Africa's dairy sector. Across the four quarters, the DSA recorded a steady increase in both national and international food safety alerts, with notable incidents related to Aflatoxin M1 contamination, adulteration, and microbiological hazards such as *Listeria monocytogenes* and *E. coli*.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 5 - Remedial programs with producers, processors and distributors

Achievements

PROJECT 5: REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAMMES WITH SUPPLIERS

***Suppliers:** Suppliers of dairy products for final consumption by humans. This includes but is not limited to:

- producer distributors (farmers selling dairy products to consumers);
- producer distributor processors (farmers adding value to dairy products and selling to consumers);
- milk shops (retail outlets selling dairy products to consumers);
- milk shop & processors (retail outlets adding value to dairy products and selling to consumers);
- processing facilities (facilities adding value to dairy products and selling through retail); and
- distributors (facilities distributing value added dairy products to consumers).

Following the activities of project 1.1, project 1.5 provides for an opportunity whereby information regarding the test results is effectively communicated to the suppliers either by means of an e-mail or WhatsApp report. Environmental health practitioners (EHPs) are also requested to communicate all test results to relevant parties.

Annual visits to suppliers are conducted either as a remedial visit in the case where non-conformances exist or as a courtesy visit if no non-conformances (on the latest 3 cycle test results) were detected. The purpose of a remedial visit is to make recommendations for corrective actions and in the case of a courtesy visit is to touch base and relationship building.

During cycle 94, a total of sixty-eight electronic and twenty-seven physical visits were paid to suppliers.

Table 3 Visits were paid to processors, PD's and milk shops

Province	Areas visited	Companies visited	E-mails	DSA further assistance provided
Gauteng	0	0	4	13
Mpumalanga	0	0	2	3
Free State	0	0	1	3
North West	0	1	5	1
Northern Cape	0	0	0	0
Western Cape	1	6	12	0
Eastern Cape	2	2	11	5
Limpopo	0	0	2	2
KwaZulu Natal	7	18	5	3

Tabel 4 Electronic visits to suppliers

Province	Companies - Electronic visited	Province	Companies – Electronic visited
Gauteng	43	Northern Cape	0
Mpumalanga	0	Western Cape	0
Free State	12	Eastern Cape	9
North West	1	Limpopo	3
		KwaZulu Natal	0

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 6 - Communication with the authorities and other organisations

Achievements

PROJECT 6: COMMUNICATION WITH AUTHORITIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

6.1 Department of Health: Directorate Food Control

The DSA in a supportive role to industry, liaised with the directorate regarding queries relating to food labelling, food safety and food additive requirements, as well as dairy technical matters. Technical matters such as the amendment of standards relating to amongst others the draft R3337 of 21 April 2024 as well as Codex standards. Request for feedback regarding the use of the lactoperoxidase system (LPS) was received from the directorate so as to continue with possible application under controlled conditions.

It has been some time, but the DSA has now obtained approval from the Department of Health to use LPS in raw milk. This approval, acknowledged by the WHO and accepted by the Directorate of Food Control, allows for its application within manufacturing processes.

When producing cheese or similar products, LPS may be used not to correct poor quality, but to suppress the growth of unwanted bacteria and preserve the integrity of the product. The approval letter, referenced on page 182, specifies that use of LPS is subject to compliance with Codex standards. Accordingly, the DSA has advised the industry that LPS can be used to prevent defects in final products.

The DSA has already circulated this guidance to the industry, noting that input suppliers must provide training on the correct use of the product. While LPS supports good manufacturing practices, it must be applied prudently. Controlled use will benefit cheese manufacturers, and its adoption remains voluntary. The DSA is pleased to confirm that LPS is available as a contributor to the industry's success. There is no compulsory requirement for regulation of LPS, as it is very costly and excessive use may negatively affect product taste.

6.2 Municipal Health Authorities

Communication with the municipal health authorities focussing on the interpretation of food safety

legislation under the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, with specific reference to hygienic processing, packing and retail of milk as well the sale of raw milk and cheese took place continued. The above actions were a result of an action plan to make law enforcement officers aware of the dangers of non-compliant product in the retail. These engagements were followed up by means of webinars and radio talks about the health risks of substandard dairy products as per Project 8.

6.3 Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)

i) Directorate: Inspection Services (IS)

Cycle results of the DSA monitoring programs regarding infringements in terms of the regulations relating to dairy and imitation dairy products were limited by the Directorate: Inspection Services.

ii) Directorate: Food Safety and Quality Assurance (FSQA policy making)

Formal communication with the FSQA continued regarding the revision of R1510 of 2019 - Regulations relating to dairy and imitation dairy products. Further consultations were dealt with under the Regulation and Standards Project of Milk SA. Certain proposed provisions are being considered for incorporation into the draft amendment regulation; however, a completion date for these processes has not yet been confirmed.

6.4 National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS): Legal Metrology

Standard procedure provides for a quarterly report regarding metrology infringements to the Senior Manager, Inspections: Legal Metrology of NRCS. No formal complaints were lodged with NRCS during the fourth quarter of 2025.

6.5 South African Bureau of Standards (SABS)

Correspondence from the SABS in respect of South African National Standards as well as information from the International Standards Organisation were appropriately dealt with and ballot papers on standards (SABS/TC 0034/SC17) were attended to, with a closing date of 20 January 2026. Further consultations were dealt with under the Regulation and Standards Project of Milk SA. The TC 0034/SC05 – Milk and Milk Products posted documents for ballot voting, with a closing date of 30 November 2025.

6.6 Communication with other organisations

6.6.1 Milk SA, MPO and SAMPRO

The DSA interacted on a regular basis with the project managers of Milk SA's Consumer Education Project, SAMPRO, as well as the Project Coordinating Committee of Milk SA. The DSA managing director serves as a member of the DRDC and its management committee and meetings were attended.

6.6.2 Consumer Goods Council of South Africa: Food Safety Initiative (CGCSA: FSI)

The DSA as a member of the Food Safety Initiative (FSI) interacted on a regular basis with the management of FSI regarding matters relating to:

Regulations under the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act – Front of Pack Labelling;

Agricultural Product Standards (APS) Act and draft regulation regarding management control systems;

Foodloss and waste;

Follow-up discussions regarding assignees appointed under the APS Act.

This work is now conducted by the DSA Project Manager: Regulatory Affairs

6.6.3 European Hygienic Engineering & Design Group (EHEDG)

The DSA is a member of the South African steering committee. DSA did not attend EHEDG workshops due to budget constraints.

6.6.4 South African Society of Dairy Technology (SASDT)

DSA personnel attended and participated the SASDT regional meetings held in the Western Cape and Gauteng during fourth quarter.

6.6.5 Tertiary institutions

The DSA serves as a member of the advisory boards of the Departments of Environmental Health of the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) as well as Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The purpose of the advisory boards is to give industry inputs and assist the universities with the development of course material for environmental health practitioners (EHPs). As project manager of the DSA, Mrs J Odendaal attended scheduled meetings during the fourth quarter.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 7 - Liaison on legislation with authorities

Achievements

PROJECT 7: LIAISON ON LEGISLATION WITH AUTHORITIES

The DSA continued liaison with the authorities regarding the following legislation and standards:

7.1 Department of Health: Directorate: Food Control

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

Following the industry submission comments regarding the draft R3337: The draft regulations relating to the labelling and advertising of foodstuffs in 2023 no further formal feedback has been received other than that the first publication by DOH is expected during the fourth quarter of 2025.

7.2 Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)

Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act 119 of 1990)

The work on the proposed draft regulation relating to dairy and imitation dairy products was completed and submitted to DALRRD. This work has now shifted to the Project Manager's office, Regulations and Standards Project of Milk SA. Progress regarding the establishment of a national residue programme as well as compliance to export requirements to EU and China continued.

7.3 South African National Standards (SABS)

Regular correspondence between DSA and the SABS occurred with formal comments addressed under the Regulations and Standards Project of Milk SA. The SANS Standards Writer was approached by dr Mark Chimes regarding SANS 1694 and 1488 relating to the welfare of dairy cattle and the transport of livestock. No significant reporting from SABS materialised during the fourth quarter due to the industry focus on foot and mouth disease outbreak

Interactions with SABS related to the administration and role of South African members and conveners in the African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO) TC 04. The ARSO's monthly and plenary meetings were attended during the second quarter of 2024. Several draft standards have been published for comments in different stages of completion. Mrs Anneke van Niekerk has been appointed by DSA to serve as SA representative on behalf of the organised dairy industry.

This work has also shifted to the Regulations and Standards Project of Milk SA managed by Mrs Thabang Rampa.

7.4 Dairy Federation (IDF), Codex Alimentarius and International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

DSA personnel actively participated and reported to the relevant standing committees it serves upon. Reporting via the SANCIDF was also conducted where appropriate and as per the Milk SA contractual agreement, all relevant correspondence and comments, where applicable, were shared with Milk SA and industry stakeholders.

Comments on IDF and Codex draft documents were shared with the South African Codex contact point.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 8 - Information and education

Achievements

PROJECT 8: INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

DSA presents information sessions based on the DSA Codes of Practice and related guideline materials to professional environmental health practitioners (EHPs) as well as student EHPs.

A dairy information session for student EHPs were presented on the 2nd of October 2025 at Durban University of Technology with 22 students attending.

On the 30th of October 2025 the DSA presented a virtual (Teams) training session to the professional

EHPs of KZN District Municipalities: eThekweni and King Cetshwayo. The topic was Analysis of milk and dairy products and the interpretation of the test results and it was attended by 150 people.

The DSA presents, with the technical assistance of Plaasmedia, monthly webinars to share relevant information with the dairy industry and interested role players.

The 8th webinar, on 29 October 2025 was attended by 62 people and the topic was “Farm audits-from best practice to sustainability”.

The 9th webinar, on 26 November 2025 was attended by 126 people and the topic was “Bacillus cereus in dairy...a hidden spoiler”.

Recordings of all the webinars on the Dairy Standard Agency’s website is useful to re-cap or for interested parties not able to attend the webinars.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 9 - Media communication

Achievements

PROJECT 9: MEDIA COMMUNICATION

9.1 Summary of paid advertising and value-added exposure

The DSA media communication provided for the following during the fourth quarter:

Month	Type of media	Title	Platform
Oct 2025	Print magazine	BEK-protokolle: Sit die regte voet voor	Veeplaas
Oct 2025	Print magazine	DSA Lab Services banner advert (tests updated)	Veeplaas
Oct 2025	Print magazine	When FMD hits: Protocols and practices	Stockfarm
Oct 2025	YouTube	Suiwel-alternatiewe en etikettering (Anneke v Niekerk)	Plaas TV
Oct 2025	YouTube	SSA ontvang Sanas-akkreditasie (Jompie Burger)	Plaas TV
Nov 2025	Print magazine	Wanneer melk nie melk is nie: Etikettering	Veeplaas
Nov 2025	Print magazine	When milk isn't really milk	Stockfarm
Nov 2025	Print magazine	DSA Lab Services banner advert (Sanas added)	Stockfarm
Nov 2025	Podcast	Volhoubare suiwelproduksie (Tania Blignaut)	AgriOnAir
Nov 2025	Online/web	Sanas accreditation article with strip ad	Agriorbit
Nov 2025	Radio	Studie: volhoubare suiwelproduksie (Tania Blignaut)	RSG Landbou
Nov 2025	Radio	Studie: volhoubare suiwelproduksie (Tania Blignaut)	LandbouRadio
Des 2025	Print magazine	SSA se mylpaal: Sanas-akkreditasie	Veeplaas
Des 2025	Print magazine	DSA Lab Services banner advert (Sanas added)	Veeplaas
Des 2025	Radio	Samewerking in melkbedryf (Jompie Burger)	LandbouRadio

9.2 Links to web placements:

November: <https://agriorbit.com/dsa-reaches-new-milestone-on-the-road-to-excellence/>

9.3 Link to YouTube placements: Plaas TV

October (DSA se SANAS-akkreditasie):

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6BsicReclCCm6M0I5Lh0Ko?si=twRjD09GRZGZMrAOMzPI6w>

November (Studie oor volhoubare suiwelproduksie): <https://youtu.be/KPW9N59boXk>

9.4 Podcasts: AgriOnAir

November (Studie oor volhoubare suiwelproduksie):

https://open.spotify.com/episode/2CQLWVjSYwCiACQh0QUwjp?si=dra0j_tNQti2AHCFDPDaQw

December (Samewerking in die suiwelbedryf):

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/1vptMnk0FPShawtmaxdzgo?si=vQ3kWRWASzGk7oXe7KodHQ>

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Goal 10 - Development of guideline documentation

Achievements

PROJECT 10: DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINE DOCUMENTATION

In response to the current foot-and-mouth disease outbreak, targeted information was disseminated to dairy farmers through our established communication channels to reinforce biosecurity awareness and promote best-practice implementation as outlined in the DSA Code of Best Practice for Dairy Farmers.

The communication focused on clearly defining biosecurity and highlighting its critical role in protecting animal health, farm profitability, and market access. Practical guidance was provided on the core components of dairy farm biosecurity, with emphasis on animal-related controls, human movement and hygiene, and the implementation of structured farm programmes. Farmers were encouraged to assess their existing biosecurity status through key focus areas, including:

- the relationship between quality and profitability;
- prevention of infectious disease introduction;
- strategic vaccination practices;
- enhanced calf and heifer management;
- routine testing;
- effective bio-containment measures;
- equipment control; and
- sanitation procedures.

In addition, guidance was shared on the development and strengthening of on-farm biosecurity plans, outlining preparation steps and essential elements required to ensure effective disease prevention, rapid response, and long-term resilience. This proactive communication aimed to support farmers in mitigating FMD-related risks, while safeguarding animal health, milk quality, and food safety.

Guidelines and additional best-practice measures were compiled to address the safe handling, transportation, and processing of raw milk originating from infected animals. These guidelines provide clear, practical requirements to mitigate food safety risks, prevent cross-contamination, and ensure compliance with applicable regulatory and public health standards.

The guidance outlines enhanced biosecurity controls, hygiene practices, segregation procedures, and traceability measures throughout the milk value chain, from on-farm collection to processing. Particular emphasis is placed on risk assessment, monitoring, and corrective actions to protect consumer health while supporting responsible industry practices.

No Non-achievements / underperformance has been reported

Income and expenditure statement

Income and expenditure statement	PRJ-0406 Dec 2025.pdf
Unnecessary spending during period	No

Popular Report

[DSA Stat quarterly report Q4 2025 Popular report.pdf](#)

Popular report and Additional documentation

No file has been uploaded

Statement

Levy funds were applied only for the purposes stated in the contract	Yes
Levy funds were applied in an appropriate and accountable manner	Yes
Sufficient management and internal control systems were in place to adequately control the project and accurately account for the project expenditure	Yes
The information provided in the report is correct	Yes