



Dairy MONTHLY

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Review of the Regulations Relating to the Labelling and Advertising of Foodstuffs

A second draft of the regulations (R.3337 of 21 April 2023), incorporating comments and proposals received by the Department of Health (DoH), has been compiled. The DoH expressed its willingness to engage with affected industry stakeholders through the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) Trade and Industry Chamber. In addition, the DoH conducted a socio-economic impact assessment of the proposed regulations. The study was expected to be completed by this stage; however, it is still outstanding.

The National Department of Agriculture indicated that it would not make the second draft of the regulations available to interested parties. However, Milk SA, through its Dairy Regulations & Standards Project, will appeal for the draft to be made available for further input, especially because it is likely to contain significant amendments.

The Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA), under the leadership of Business Unity South Africa (BUSA), will, however, study the draft in detail as part of the NEDLAC process, with particular reference to determining which of the proposed amendments have been incorporated. It is expected that the Milk SA Project, through its participation in the CGCSA, will have access to the second draft.

Anneke van Niekerk, a consultant to the Milk SA Project, was recently interviewed on *RSG Landbou* regarding the particulars of the regulatory review. Listen to the interview at www.clyp.it/scxjqnc or scan the QR code.



Import and export trends

The latest Milk SA report indicates that dairy product imports are expected to reach a record low in 2026 on a mass basis, with declines projected across all categories except butter. Butter imports, estimated at 2 140 tonnes, are expected to be the highest recorded since 2022. While dairy exports reached their highest mass-based level in 11 years in 2025, exports are expected to decline to a record low in 2026. These export figures exclude sales to the BeLN (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia) countries. During the first six months of 2026, sales to BeLN accounted for 66% of the total mass sold to BeLN and exported to other countries. Visit www.milksa.co.za/imports-and-exports for the full report.

Focus on the reopening of export markets

Milk SA is currently prioritising the development of an export-focussed residue control programme aimed at facilitating access to potential export markets, including China and the Arab countries. This work is being undertaken through the Regulations & Standards Project and the Customs Duties & Market Access Projects of Milk SA, in liaison with the Dairy Standard Agency (DSA).

Although China has accepted the dairy industry's proposed export plans, no accredited laboratories in South Africa are currently able to perform the full spectrum of analyses required. The DSA is therefore liaising with international laboratories to establish the applicable cost structure. The European Union (EU) is also providing assistance in this regard.

Discussions with the National Department of Agriculture on the following priority issues are ongoing: Remaining hurdles relating to VPN20 for exports to China and the EU, including timeframes; implementation and coordination of the residue monitoring programme for China, the EU and the United Arab Emirates; strategies and timelines for reopening markets that currently maintain restrictions on South African dairy exports, including countries forming part of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the South African Customs Union member countries.