



## SIZA and LEAF Marque Announce Equivalency Agreement to Streamline Audit Processes for South African Producers

SIZA, The Sustainability Initiative of South Africa, and the LEAF Marque programme are thrilled to announce a significant milestone in their ongoing collaboration – the achievement of equivalency between their respective standards. This achievement follows an in-depth benchmarking process aimed at understanding the synergies and distinctions between SIZA Social, SIZA Environmental and the LEAF Marque Standard.

*The LEAF Marque programme has determined that the SIZA Environmental Standard, supported by the SIZA Social Standard, qualifies for LEAF Marque equivalence Option B. This equivalence encompasses additional modules as a bolt-on option, Landscape & Nature Conservation and Engaging Society, and the completion of the LEAF Sustainable Farming Review, further enriching the sustainability landscape for South African producers.*

The aim of this agreement will enable a streamlined certification process. Producers will now have the convenience of undergoing a single SIZA environmental audit, supplemented by a LEAF bolt-on module, conducted by mutually recognized and approved audit firms and auditors. The primary objective of this collaborative effort is to alleviate the certification burdens on producers, eliminate redundancy, and foster greater alignment between standards.

SIZA and LEAF Marque are confident that this equivalency agreement will not only enhance the sustainability practices of South African producers but also broaden the sustainability landscape. It marks a significant step towards achieving harmonisation and increased continuity between standards, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable future for all.

Retha Louw, CEO of SIZA stated: *“SIZA is thrilled to embark on this exciting journey with the LEAF Marque team. Over the past year, our collaboration has been truly wonderful, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the LEAF team for their dedication and hard work. Our shared commitment to offering South African producers a streamlined and cost-effective solution for third-party audits remains the main goal. With this partnership, SIZA and LEAF are driving the way forward for a more efficient approach to agricultural auditing, all while upholding the integrity of the audit process and methodology.”*

*“This achievement is a significant milestone in our ongoing mission to promote sustainable farming practices worldwide. By aligning and collaborating with SIZA Environmental, we are taking a crucial step towards a more sustainable and interconnected global agricultural industry that puts farmers at the forefront of our certification schemes.”* Clare Mike, Technical and Business Development Director, LEAF.

A more detailed and operational document containing information on the audit process will be shared to South African suppliers once the SIZA and LEAF Marque team have finalised the relevant documentation.

### **About SIZA**

SIZA, the Sustainability Initiative of South Africa, provides a platform for agricultural stakeholders to ensure ethical and environmentally sustainable trade. This platform monitors care for the environment and compliance with labour legislation. To date the SIZA membership reaches more than 4 000 users which includes primary, secondary and tertiary members of the programme. Our aim is to encourage continuous improvement in practices over time in excess of the minimum legal requirements. We engage directly with our stakeholders throughout the value chain in order to identify needs and issues. Interventions and support tools are created by measuring member compliance over time.

For more information about SIZA, visit our website: [www.siza.co.za](http://www.siza.co.za)

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### **About the LEAF Marque Programme**

The principles of Integrated Farm Management (IFM) underpin the requirements of LEAF Marque certification, as set out in the LEAF Marque Standard. IFM is a whole farm business approach that delivers more sustainable farming. Modern technology and traditional methods are used with the goal of delivering prosperous farming that enriches the environment and engages local communities.

A farm business managed to IFM principles will demonstrate site-specific and continuous improvement across the whole farm including Organisation and Planning, Soil Management and Fertility, Crop Health and Protection, Pollution Control and By-Product Management, Animal Husbandry, Energy Efficiency, Water Management, Landscape and Nature Conservation and Community Engagement.

To find out more about LEAF Marque, visit our website: <https://leaf.eco/leafmarque/about>.

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