



MARULA INDUSTRY WORKSHOP: ADVANCING QUALITY AND PROTECTION THROUGH INNOVATION

Polokwane, South Africa – November 6-7, 2024

The Marula industry in Southern Africa is taking a significant step forward in protecting and enhancing the value of its products through Geographical Indications (GI) and scientific innovations. At the Marula Industry Workshop held on November 6-7, 2024, key industry players, policymakers, and researchers gathered at The Ranch Resort, Polokwane, to discuss sustainable growth strategies, market expansion, and industry standardization.



**b-TAF
PROJECT**
BOTANICALS TRUSTED AND
AUTHENTICATED FINGERPRINTING

 **PRECISION OIL
LABORATORIES**



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Advancing Quality with b-TAF and Precision Oil Laboratories

One of the workshop's highlights was the presentation of the Botanicals Trusted and Authenticated Fingerprinting (b-TAF) project, a groundbreaking initiative ensuring the authenticity and quality of Marula and Baobab oil. Led by Dr. Mathilda Mostert of Precision Oil Laboratories, this project has been instrumental in establishing a robust database of oil quality standards, preventing adulteration, and ensuring traceability across the supply chain.

During the b-TAF Marula and Baobab Oil Testing Project, 60 Marula oil samples and 27 Marula nut samples were analyzed, confirming the high purity of Marula oil, which comprises 99% triglycerides. The testing also demonstrated that any adulteration above 5% could be detected, ensuring product authenticity and strengthening market confidence.

Dr. Mostert emphasized that the project's findings would contribute significantly to the development of the GI for Marula, offering a scientific foundation for quality control and market positioning. Precision Oil Laboratories continues to lead in providing reliable testing services that benefit producers, traders, and consumers alike.

Towards Geographical Indication (GI) Protection

A central discussion point at the workshop was the registration of Marula as a Geographical Indication (GI). The GI would protect the identity of Marula, ensuring that only products sourced from designated regions can use the name. Participants explored the process of GI registration under South African and EU regulations, learning from successful cases such as Rooibos and Karoo Lamb.

The workshop outlined crucial steps towards achieving GI registration, including:

- Developing a Product Specification Document
- Defining quality standards and traceability measures
- Establishing a cross-border collaboration framework
- Strengthening industry governance and cooperation

Strategic Market Growth & Sustainability

The workshop also addressed the broader Marula Sector Development Plan (SDP), with updates on sustainability initiatives, market development strategies, and regulatory compliance. Key points discussed included:

- The importance of responsible harvesting and resource assessment
- The need for increased industry collaboration and research integration
- Opportunities for global market expansion through certification and branding

With the involvement of regional stakeholders from South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe, the industry is poised to leverage scientific advancements, regulatory frameworks, and cooperative strategies to strengthen its position in global markets.

The Way Forward

The Marula Industry Workshop marked a turning point in the sector's development.

The next steps include finalizing the GI application, expanding the b-TAF quality database, and securing international recognition for Marula products.

With Precision Oil Laboratories, Dr. Mathilda Mostert, and b-TAF leading the charge in quality assurance, the future of Marula as a premium, protected African botanical is brighter than ever.

For more info visit: www.b-TAF.org

