



Winners of the SAAFOST - IFT Infographic Competition Announced: “Making Food Safety Accessible through Infographics”

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Steps to food safety (cdc.gov)

Ensuring the food we consume is both safe and nutritious involves everyone in the food chain. In South Africa, producing safe food can be challenging, as a large portion of the sector is informal and non-regulated. Forty percent of the South African food market is informal, consisting of a mixture of small, unregistered, and registered businesses that

provide services such as grocery retail, food preparation, and delivery. Such enterprises play a key role in convenience, access, and affordability of foods within communities. However, food vendors in the informal sector often lack food safety training in terms of food handling, preparation, and personal hygiene.

This need for education inspired food scientists in South Africa to introduce a new initiative to help close this gap. The idea was to create infographics to visually represent food safety practices to be used primarily in the informal sector and in other sectors as needed, for example, schools in rural areas that provide a daily meal to the school children. This would reduce the unintended consequences of food-borne illness and improve overall food security. A report by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases in South Africa showed that from 2018 to 2020 alone, 2932 foodborne incidents were reported; this does not account for the large number of unreported cases (Ramalwa et al., 2020). Of the reported cases, it was found that close to 50% of the incidents originated from food service facilities in universities, schools, and catering facilities for large gatherings.

Thus in August 2021, the Food Science for Relief and Development (FSRD) Organizations Liaison Team, in collaboration with the South African Association for Food Science and Technology (SAAFoST) launched the first food safety infographic competition for food science students and young professionals. FSRD is an initiative of the International Division of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT). The goal of the

competition was to produce engaging graphics and content illustrating food safety practices that appeal to a broad audience.

Twelve contest entries were received and an international panel of five judges selected the top three entries. In no order of ranking, the winners were:

1. **Hesti Bester & Kathryn Brink** (University of Pretoria).
2. **Natasha Gough Palmer & Celeste Weiss** (University of Pretoria).
3. **Jana Schreuder** (Stellenbosch University).

Food Safety and Hygiene



An infographic poster available in English, Setswana and Zulu about healthy practices to keep food safe to eat.

[Get the poster](#)

Principles of Food Safety in the Kitchen



An infographic poster available in English, Setswana and Zulu about routines in the preparation, handling and storage of food in the kitchen meant to prevent foodborne illness and injury.

[Get the poster](#)

S.M.A.R.T and Safe Food Practices



An infographic poster available in English, Setswana and Zulu about S.M.A.R.T (Separate raw from cooked, Maintain cleanliness, Assure use of safe ingredients, Remember to cook food thoroughly, and Temperature is key) and safe food practices.

[Get the poster](#)

saafost.org.za/infographic-posters/

Winners received prizes of vouchers worth R3000 sponsored by SAAFoST.

To reach a large audience and have the desired impact on promoting food safety literacy among the informal food sector, the winning entries have been translated into two local languages (Setswana and Zulu). They are available for the general public to use and downloadable on the [SAAFoST website](#). To encourage offline learning the posters will be placed at local South African food canteens and cafeterias, and fast-food restaurants. In addition, members of SAAFoST will be encouraged to display the posters in their offices and manufacturing facilities. Universities will also have them at their Food Science, Agriculture, and related departments.

Enabling a food-safe environment is a shared responsibility and congratulations to the winners for creating this impactful work. By sharing food safety messaging in a way that is fun, easy, and accessible, it is able to impact a wide audience. Hopefully, through these initiatives and many more to come, food science can be used in creative ways to make our global food system safer.

Download the infographics [here](#)

Special thanks to the judges, project team, and organizations that contributed to the success of this project.

Judges

1. Prof. Lucia Anelich, Director of Anelich Consulting and Adjunct Professor at Central University of Technology, South Africa
2. Prof. Gunnar Sigge, Head of Dept Food Science, Stellenbosch University, South Africa
3. Namhla Skweyiya, Head of Food Safety, Quality, and Sustainability, Harvestfresh Farms, South Africa
4. Emma Johnson, Mane Flavors, South Africa
5. Maame Ekuia Manful, FSRD Member and Ph.D. Student at Technological University Dublin, Ireland
6. Lara Johnson SAAFOST Member, Food science student at Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Project Team

Prof. Lucia Anelich (Director of Anelich Consulting and Adjunct Professor at Central University of Technology, South Africa.), Prof. Gunnar Sigge (Head of Dept Food Science, Stellenbosch University, South Africa), Lisa Zychowski (FSRD), Donna Rosa (FSRD), Maame Ekuia Manful (FSRD Member and Ph.D. Student at Technological University Dublin, Ireland)

Supporting Members: Tsetse Baloyi (Communications Officer, SAAFoST) and Susan Featherstone (past CEO, SAAFoST)

Reference

Ramalwa N., Page N., Smith A., Sekwadi P., Shonhiwa A., Genevie N., Essel V., Ramudzulu M., Ngomane M., Thomas J. (2020). *Has Foodborne Disease Outbreak Notification and Investigation Changed Since the Listeriosis Outbreak in South Africa? A Review of Foodborne Disease Outbreaks Reported to the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, March 2018 - August 2020*. 18(2). National Institute for Communicable Diseases Public Health Surveillance Bulletin. Available: <https://www.nicd.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NICD-Bulletin-Vol18-Iss2-October-2020.pdf>