



Quality Assurance. **From farm to shop.**



**QS. Quality
Scheme for Food.**

Press release

Laboratories in the QS Scheme Confirm their Abilities

Successful laboratory competence test for the residue monitoring of fruit, vegetables and potatoes

With additional requirements, 71 laboratories from 13 countries faced up to the latest "stress test" for authorized laboratories in the QS Scheme this spring. The outline conditions for the test practice are now aimed more towards the daily routine at the laboratories and a new points system ensures the permanent appraisal of competence.

Due to the complexity of the ingredients (which included chlorophyll and sulphur compounds), the leek matrix examined in the latest test was demanding. A total of six active ingredients had to be detected.

The test also focused more on lab routine because the labs no longer receive advance notification of the test matrix, which means that selective preparation for a specific matrix is no longer possible. Another new aspect for the labs was that the samples were allowed to be submitted within a larger time period of three months (March to May). In addition to this, the maximum permissible analysis time was shortened from four to three days.

Of the 54 laboratories currently recognized, 34 participated in the spring test, 20 of them from Germany and 14 from abroad. Overall, 29 of the 34 recognized labs were successful. An additional 37 labs are currently undergoing the recognition procedure. 13 of them were successful, six of whom are located in Germany and seven abroad.

Despite the more difficult conditions, the number of QS-recognized laboratories remained virtually unchanged at 53. Jens Schäfer, who manages the laboratory competence tests at QS, explains: "This time, the active ingredient Fluzifop P, a herbicide, caused the most problems during analysis. 20 labs weren't able to identify the substance and 16 quantified it wrongly".

QS introduced a new points system especially for the appraisal of the laboratories. Wilfried Kamphausen, QS expert for fruit, vegetables and potatoes, sees great advantages in the new system: "By evaluating the points, we are able to appraise the performance of the laboratories more precisely. Good results are rewarded on a permanent basis while errors are revealed directly because the labs then have to sit the test more often". Accordingly, six recognized labs will have to resit the test in the autumn along with four other recognized labs

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which failed this time but were nevertheless able to retain their QS recognition, which will only be lost if they fail again.

QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH is a scheme owner and responsible for the QS scheme for foodstuffs. The standards defined by QS specify strict, traceable production criteria for all stages of the value-added chain, from the producer to the retailer. The cross-stage monitoring of these criteria, along with the traceability of the agricultural products and the foodstuffs made using these products are characteristic of the system. More than 23,000 companies in the fruit, vegetable, potato sector have decided in favor of participation in the QS scheme for foodstuffs.

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