

SOUTH AFRICAN FOOD COMPOSITION DATABASE (SAFOODS)

The definitive South African food composition database, as guided by the National Department of Health

BACKGROUND

The role of nutrition in all aspects of health is indisputable. Understanding and quantifying the nutritional content of food consumed and using this as a planning and management tool for improved health outcomes has significant benefits at all user levels. The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) has a mandate to improve the health of the nation through research, development and innovation so that people can enjoy a better quality of life. As such, in the 1970's identified the need for a country-specific food composition database that could be used for the analysis of dietary intake, developed, maintained and updated by the SAMRC.

TECHNOLOGY DESCRIPTION

The SAMRC has developed the South African Food Composition Database (SAFOODS), as well as Food Composition Tables (FCT) and related tools and products based on SAFOODS, including FoodFinder, a dietary intake assessment software programme. The database and related tools are maintained and updated by the SAMRC, with the most recent update published in 2017. The current database serves as the definitive South African food composition database guided as such, by the National Department of Health. The data in SAFOODS has been made available as a resource to dietitians, students, universities, researchers and members of the food industry through the published Food Composition Tables and FoodFinder.

VALUE PROPOSITION

As the definitive South African food composition database guided by the National Department of Health, SAFOODS and its easy-to-use related tools, such as FoodFinder and the Food Composition Tables (FCT), are essential for the provision of accurate dietary information on, as well as for labelling of, food

products available and consumed in South Africa. The database is continually updated as new products and guidelines are released. SAFOODS offers the potential to develop country-specific dietary and nutrition management tools, services and products for individuals, companies and for research purposes.

CURRENT STATUS

The latest database was published in 2017 and the updated version will be published in 2019, comprising over 1000 food items across 16 Food Groups. The dietary intake assessment software programme, FoodFinder is available to external users. An API (Application Programming Interface) for SAFOODS is in the process of being developed, to allow the development of dietary intake assessment mobile applications that would utilize the curated data from SAFOODS.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STATUS & PUBLICATIONS

SAFOODS and FoodFinder are protected by copyright and the know-how within is kept confidential.

OPPORTUNITIES

The SAMRC is seeking partnership opportunities with companies, non-profits and/or NGOs to utilize the food composition data in SAFOODS for the development of nutrition and dietary related products and services for a variety of target markets aimed at improving health outcomes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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