



PROTECTING COLOMBIAN CONSUMERS THROUGH THE SCIENCE OF MEASUREMENT

COLOMBIA

One of the greatest impacts of metrology on people’s lives is the possibility to guarantee that consumers receive the exact amount of product purchased at the market. For this reason, since 2003, the Superintendence of Industry and Commerce (SIC) of Colombia, the highest national authority in legal metrology and consumer protection, has been carrying out metrological controls of prepackaged products. These actions also facilitate the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in formal trade under fair conditions and the access of national products to markets with stricter requirements.

However, over the years, national capacities in legal metrology became insufficient to verify certain products in the market, either because there was a lack of infrastructure or knowledge, or because the regulation did not establish requirements that were already mandatory in other economies. Due to new international recommendations, the country updated its internal regulations and capacities so the SIC could address deceptive consumer practices related to product content.

With UNIDO’s support, the SIC began implementing new national metrological regulations for prepackaged products that came into force in 2021. More than 130 quality infrastructure officials and 21 control inspectors were

trained by a recognized international expert. Furthermore, the SIC was supported technically to double the capacity of accredited scopes in its laboratory and received equipment to verify products that previously could not be verified. A guide for producers and consumers was also published with the main changes related to the prohibition of misleading packaging legislation.

The SIC is proud to have become a reference for countries in the region, including Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago, and it has shared its experience and exchanged best practices with other countries like Mexico.

Thanks to these strengthened capacities, Colombian consumers of prepackaged products can now be sure that they are receiving high-quality products with the right content, boosting their confidence.

The Global Quality and Standards Programme (GQSP) is a global initiative to strengthen the export competitiveness of twelve partner countries, supported by Switzerland through the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).



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