

The Testing, Inspection and Certification Industry calls for an efficient Farm to Fork Strategy

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Introduction

The TIC Council welcomes the European Commission's Farm to Fork Strategy, considering it an important development towards reducing the environmental footprint of food value chains as well as improving the availability of safe food in the EU.

Among the plethora of existing environmental claims in the food supply chain, proper assessment and verification are key to busting myths and providing facts to help consumers make informed decisions.

The testing, inspection and certification (TIC sector) is in a unique position to provide independent assessment to confirm environmental, nutritional and safety claims related to food and farming, during all production and processing stages. This ensures that consumers have a guarantee of the quality of the product they are purchasing.

Benefits to the Strategy

The TIC sector believes that the Strategy's success will depend on the proper integration of systematic confirmation of all economic operators' claims. In this context, we recommend:

- Integrating certification in the legislative framework for sustainable food systems and the EU carbon farming initiative, to confirm sustainability claims.
- Ensuring that all new rules on food and nutrition labelling are based on internationally accepted standards and are verified by third-party certification.
- Ensuring that existing private labels on sustainability and food safety will remain valid in the new labelling framework, if they refer to accurate and third-party verified claims. Interested consumers are already familiar with these labels and removing them from the market could cause confusion.
- Ensuring that the EU code and monitoring framework for responsible business and marketing conduct will include a system for verifying the implementation of all actors' pledges.

The TIC sector's contribution to sustainable food systems

The TIC sector can play an important role in ensuring the Farm to Fork Strategy's successful implementation. Our members have the technical expertise, technology and experience to conduct meaningful monitoring, verification of claims, traceability, risk management and compliance testing on food production sites, retailers and throughout the value chain.

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TIC Council is a global association representing over 90 international independent third-party testing, inspection, certification and verification organizations. Testing, Inspection and Certification (TIC) companies cater to a diverse range of industry sectors and a variety of standards and legislation. The industry represents an estimated one million employees across the world with annual sales of approximately USD 200 billion.