

Last word!

by Mike Benner
SIBA Managing Director

SIBA's new Food Safety & Quality Certificate (FSQ)

In SIBA we all seek to champion quality in everything we do and that, quite clearly, is the right approach. We need to work together to ensure that retailers and consumers know that SIBA membership stands for the very best in quality beer. For you that means great quality beer brewed, packaged and distributed to perfection and, not least, it complies with food safety legislation. In a crowded marketplace, nothing less will do.

The launch of the new SIBA Food Safety and Quality Certificate is a great step forward in providing all members with a practical means of access to an independent quality-driven audit that promises to deliver genuine benefits for your brewery. We recognise that not all members are ready and able to step up to SALSA or BRC schemes and it is right that SIBA, as the leading trade association for British craft brewers creates what we regard as a first step towards SALSA.

You have hopefully heard about the scheme already, via the pages of The SIBA Journal and

the Toolbox alerts, but as a reminder an independent assessor visits your brewery every two years to carry out the audit and the cost is payable in ten instalments of £60; a benefit no other scheme can provide.

It has always been the case that members have to abide by the Manual of Good Brewing Practice on which the SIBA audit is based. That is clearly written into our rules, but we have not been good at promoting quality by enforcing this rule and our new scheme provides the means to do that, reasonably and over a period of time, to enable members to adjust and get involved. We are aiming to have all Beerflex members audited within two years, with new members done immediately, but even if you are not on Beerflex you can come forward to request an audit right now.

We have launched the scheme because we want to ensure quality and because retailers have told us that they want the reassurance of an independent audit. It is a crucial point as retailers increasingly demand accreditation through such a scheme. I hope members will see the very real benefits of SIBA now having its own scheme to promote self-improvement.



The implementation of the scheme is very demanding and we are still learning and implementing tweaks here and there as a means of constant development. Our food technologists and assessors are working hard to make sure the FSQ is the best of its kind in the marketplace and is operating on the basis that all breweries can become better at what they do, no matter how good they are! The fundamental concept of the FSQ is that a member enrolls in a scheme of improvement.

The scheme is now well and truly underway so do please contact the team (details on page 85) to enrol.

Cheers

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mike Benner'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mike Benner