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ILSA is the first Italian company in the fertiliser sector to have a laboratory accredited according to EN / ISO 17025 standards

ACCREDIA, the only national body authorised to carry out accreditation for testing and calibration laboratories, and whose certifications are valid throughout Europe, has recently granted accreditation to ILSA's in-house laboratory for all 5 parameters required by the company. This is the first instance in Italy of a company's own laboratory being granted ACCREDIA accreditation. Generally, it is private laboratories, whose mission is to produce analyses, that undergo procedures to acquire accreditation to then be able to issue valid certificates, recognised at European level. This is not the case with ILSA, which has decided to put itself forward in a bid to ensure the basic chemical parameters of its fertilisers to both its farmers and industrial partners, in an even more rigorous way.

ILSA can now certify the total levels of nitrogen and carbon, as well as levels of nitrate and ammoniacal nitrogen, allowing it to provide tested and verified data, contributing to the advancement of even more efficient forms of agriculture.

Among the parameters to be accredited, the total nitrogen content was confirmed using two different analytical techniques: Kjeldahl and elemental analysis. The first technique, a traditional method well known in the industry, adheres to standard UNI-EN 15750. The second technique, also well known, has been successfully applied by ILSA technicians to the "fertiliser" matrix, enabling them to greatly reduce analysis time and minimise the environmental impact and worker exposure. All of the results are extremely accurate and repeatable, and provide responses for the production departments almost in real time.

For the company based in Vicenza, this translates into a strategic asset from an industrial and productive standpoint, increasing the speed of the entire process of manufacturing its fertilisers. Although it now has its own accredited laboratory, ILSA can still produce independently validated documents for the countries where it registers its products, where accepted of course.

"The process of gaining accreditation is far from trivial", stressed the head of the laboratory, **Alfonso Iannone**, "because it is not only a matter of complying with procedures which govern the analytical process in all its aspects: from receiving and handling the sample, analysis, storage and issuing results, but also demonstrating, during inspection visits, that the tools, expertise and results on certified samples are fully in line with expectations". This has required significant investments into our facilities, with the partial replacement of the entire instrument chain, as well as into human resources. The process began back in summer 2012, even though the company does not intend to make this service a new area of business.

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On top of its quality, environmental and energy certification, ILSA has joined the chemical industry's global programme, 'Responsible Care', as well as the INAIL 'Lavoro Sicuro' (Safe Work) project. What's more, with the recent analysis on the environmental footprint of the organisation and its products, and the accreditation of its laboratory, ILSA has demonstrated, as stated by Company President **Paolo Girelli**: "the ability and willingness to objectively measure performance in terms of quality and sustainability, with the aim of communicating its values and achievements transparently and securely, both within and outside the company". **Girelli** ends by saying that "For ILSA, economic, social and environmental quality and sustainability are givens".

About ILSA: Since 1956, ILSA has been manufacturing and selling organic and organo-mineral fertilizers in solid and liquid form, bio-stimulants and products with specific actions. We offer a complete range of products for both conventional and organic agriculture. Our mission is to meet the requirements of an agriculture sector that is becoming increasingly specialised and concerned towards environmental issues, by creating new and effective high-quality products from the finest natural materials. The company's research centre, in operation since 1976, combined with technological innovation, have shaped our desire for continuous improvement, and allowed ILSA to remain at the forefront of the biotechnology sector for plant nutrition and bio-stimulation. The company has three production facilities; two in Italy (Arzignano-Vicenza and Molfetta-Bari) and one in Brazil (Porto Alegre).