



GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE

MISSION

“Continuous improvement in food safety management systems to ensure confidence in the delivery of safe food to consumers”

AIMS: GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE

- Facilitate mutual recognition between Standard Owners worldwide
- Work towards integrity and quality in the certification of Standards and the accreditation of certifying bodies
- Improve cost efficiency throughout the Supply Chain

Provide a unique platform for the exchange of ideas and information on food safety

What is the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) ?

The formation of the GFSI was first proposed in April 2000 by a group of international retailers' CEO's with the aim of enhancing food safety, ensuring consumer protection and of strengthening consumer confidence.

The GFSI was launched at the CIES Annual Executive Congress in Dublin, Ireland on 31st May 2000. In 2005, the GFSI Foundation, a non-profit making entity, was created under Belgian law.

The GFSI functions under the auspices of CIES – The Food Business Forum, the international network of retailers and their suppliers.

Since its inception, programmes have been developed to set requirements for Food Safety Systems and to improve efficiency throughout the supply Chain.

The GFSI is a retailer lead initiative, but stakeholders from all parts of the food industry and its Supply Chain actively participate.

How does the GFSI work to achieve its objectives ?

Retailers accept certificates issued to their suppliers of own label products, fresh produce and meat by Certification Bodies on the basis of Food Safety Standards. These certificates are based on an assessment of the suppliers' production facilities and methods and are intended to ensure that food is produced safely. There are many such Standards and suppliers with multiple customers are often audited many times per year. This costs both money and time.

The GFSI is working, through the implementation and maintenance of a scheme, the Guidance Document, to recognise and compare Food Safety Standards worldwide in order to encourage mutual recognition of these Standards and to avoid multiplication of effort. The Guidance Document contains commonly agreed criteria for Food Safety Standards, against which any Standard can be measured, compared and ultimately recognised by the GFSI.

The GFSI does not carry out accreditation or certification, but encourages third party audits against the Standards it recognises in order to encourage efficiency and to allow suppliers to direct their resources to continuous improvement in food safety and quality.

Through the creation of representative forums for discussion, including participants from throughout the Supply Chain, the GFSI also works toward the sharing of best practice for Accreditation and Certification Bodies in order to continuously improve Auditor Competence.

GFSI BENEFITS

FOR RETAILERS

- Improved production standards in factories
- Improved information on food safety schemes
- Exchange of best practices and knowledge
- Simplified purchasing procedures

FOR MANUFACTURERS

- Improved Cost Efficiency
- Reduced number of audits

FOR STANDARD OWNERS

- Exchange of Information
- Greater transparency in the food industry
- Continuous improvement
- Market opportunities

- Clarity of food safety scheme requirements

- Time and resources to invest in food quality and safety levels

FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES

- Information Exchange
- Improved Auditor Competence
- Improved audit quality
- New Market Opportunities

FOR ACCREDITATION BODIES

- Exchange of best practice
- Knowledge sharing
- Opportunities to work with the food industry to improve auditing standards

GFSI STRUCTURE

The Role of the GFSI Board

The GFSI Board is responsible for policy, strategic direction and good governance. It reports to the full CIES Board.

GFSI Board Members

The members are currently drawn from the following companies;

Chair Carrefour, France.

Members Tesco, United Kingdom. Royal Ahold, Netherlands. Delhaize Hannaford, USA. Metro, Germany. Migros, Switzerland. Wal-Mart, USA.

Advisor Members Danone, France. Hormel Foods Corp., USA.

LATEST ACHIEVEMENTS

2004—2006

- Continuous improvement of the Guidance Document, now in its 4th Edition.
- Containment of the numbers of retail driven private Standards globally.
- Full recognition of BRC Technical Standard Version 4, SQF 1000, SQF 2000 and NZGAP.
- IFS Version 4 is also compliant in every respect with the Guidance Document with the exception of audit frequency, which is allowed at up to 18 month intervals.
- Dutch HACCP is working to resolve small issues concerning implementation plans and audit methodology reconciliation.
- In 2005 more than 16,000 certificates were issued by GFSI recognised schemes. This figure continues to grow year on year.
- Creation of a fully representative Technical Committee with members from retail, manufacturing, accreditation and certification bodies, Standard Owners and other food industry experts.

In February 2006, the most successful International Food Safety Conference to date with almost 500 delegates from over 40 countries.

KEY PROJECTS 2006—2007

The Technical Committee, which replaces the former Task Force with a tighter structure, is working on a restricted number of topics in 2006 - 2007;

- Greater transparency in the GFSI benchmarking process.
- Clarification of ISO 22000 for the food industry.
- The creation of a gold standard for auditor competence.



The first meeting has recently taken place and the committee will be reporting back at the next International Food Safety Conference to be held in Munich, 31st January to 2nd February 2007. The Technical Committee is also charged with making recommendations to the GFSI Board on future strategic direction.

THE FUTURE

Work will be ongoing on the chosen topics for 2006 – 2007 with the Technical Committee and the Board regularly reporting back, both through this website and in the form of periodic newsletters. There will also be opportunities for all stakeholders to contribute to the future agenda of the GFSI, starting with the meeting held for this purpose in Munich, 31st January 2007. It is expected that stakeholders will, in keeping with GFSI's stated scope of work, which includes the full Supply Chain, request that such issues as pre-farm standards, packaging, feed, transport and logistics and good retail practice be taken into consideration for the latter half of 2007. In addition, the GFSI will, of course, continue to provide, in keeping with its mission, an unique platform for the exchange of ideas and information on food safety and will continue to build on the success of the annual CIES International Food Safety Conference.

Paris, October 2006