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Update from the GFSI Chairman

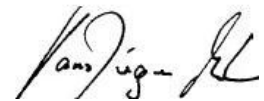
Welcome from the GFSI Chairman – **Jürgen Matern**, Vice President Regulatory Affairs & External Relations QSHE, Metro AG

Welcome to the latest update from the Global Food Safety Initiative. In April I wrote about our GFSI Stakeholder meeting which took place in February, and the results of our poll which showed that once again auditor competence had figured as the key issue for GFSI to focus on. During the meeting we asked stakeholders to provide their feedback on the work of the auditor competence working group which began in September 2010. In response to the great interest that was shown during this meeting, the GFSI Board has requested that the Technical Working Group accelerate their timeline for completion of the work, and we look forward to sharing the results of their work in the months to come.



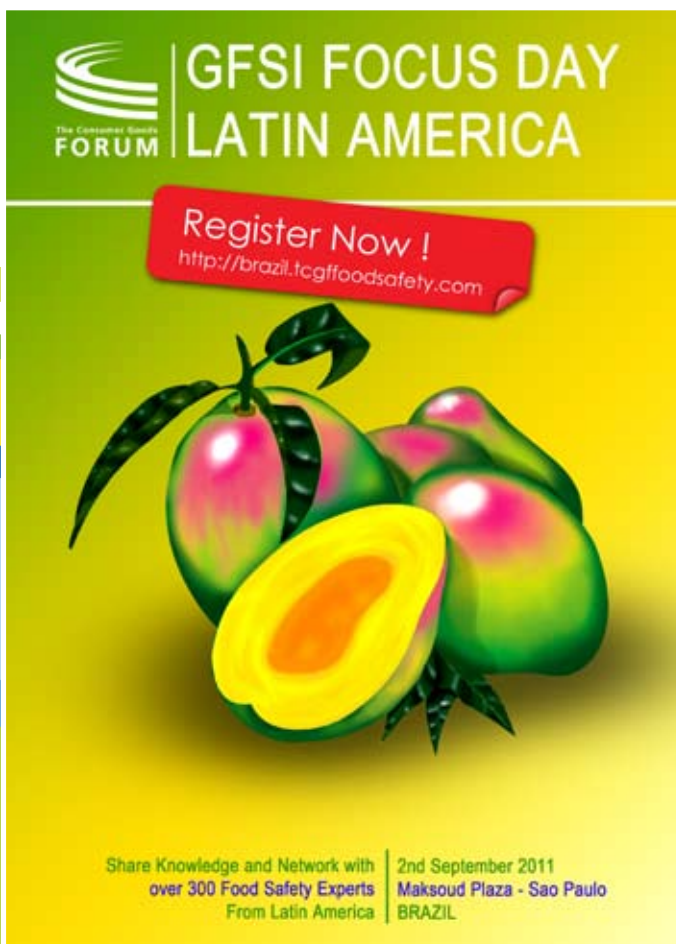
In April several GFSI Board members and technical experts spent time in China, reaching out to local companies and members of the government administration, as well as participating in the CCFA conference with sessions on GFSI.

Also rapidly approaching are our two upcoming regional events, the GFSI Focus Day in Sao Paulo, Brazil and a Food Safety Day in Tokyo, Japan. I hope that if you are based near either of these two locations and are interested in finding out more about GFSI and the current food safety landscape then you will bring your colleagues and join fellow food safety experts at these exceptional opportunities for networking and knowledge exchange. These regional events are a fundamental part of our commitment to communicate locally to our stakeholders and we look forward to seeing you there!



RECENT GFSI ACHIEVEMENTS

- ▶ GFSI Guidance Document scope of recognition now includes key elements for the recognition of food safety requirements related to Packaging and Animal Conversion.
- ▶ Launch of the GFSI Global Markets Capacity Building Programme
- ▶ GFSI continues to increase awareness in China through conferences and local workshops



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GFSI TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS UPDATE

Animal Conversion

This working group held its second meeting in May, and completed its mandate to define and develop the scope of recognition and the key elements that shall be in place for the recognition of Animal Handling food safety requirements by GFSI in the GFSI Guidance Document Part III – Scheme Scope and Key Elements. The key elements for inclusion in the Guidance Document as defined by the working group were circulated for a 4-week consultation period in May and June, and once the working group has reviewed the comments and they have been approved by the GFSI Board, the requirements will be published.



Packaging

This working group also held its second meeting in May, and completed its mandate to define and develop the scope of recognition and the key elements that shall be in place for the recognition of Packaging food safety requirements by GFSI in the GFSI Guidance Document Part III – Scheme Scope and Key Elements. The key elements were also circulated for consultation and will be reviewed by the working group as well as the GFSI Board, with publication expected for end of July.



Auditor Competence

In order to accelerate its work as per the request of the GFSI Board, the working group has split into two sub-working groups. One is completing work on defining the generic food safety auditor competencies underpinning GFSI benchmarked schemes, and the other is considering transparent and robust options for implementation of the GFSI food safety auditor competencies to provide greater consistency.

Global Markets Manufacturing

A final review was carried out of all drafted documents for the Global Markets Capacity Building Programme to ensure consistency in terminology across all documents and to draft all necessary supporting documents to guide users through the programme. Once a final legal review has taken place and the website hosting the documents has been prepared, the documents will be made freely available to any interested stakeholders.

Global Markets Primary Production

Two sub-groups drafted the basic level assessor guideline and finalized the intermediate level checklist and guideline. The group also carried out a comparison of both the basic and intermediate level requirements against the Guidance Document, and determined that the basic level requirements are equivalent to 40% of the requirements set out in the Guidance Document, and the intermediate level requirements are equivalent to 80% of the requirements set out in the Guidance Document, thereby differing slightly from the structure of the requirements established for manufacturing. The group is finalizing the documents via conference call over the next few months, with a planned release by the end of 2011.

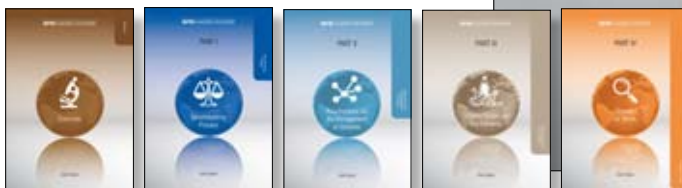
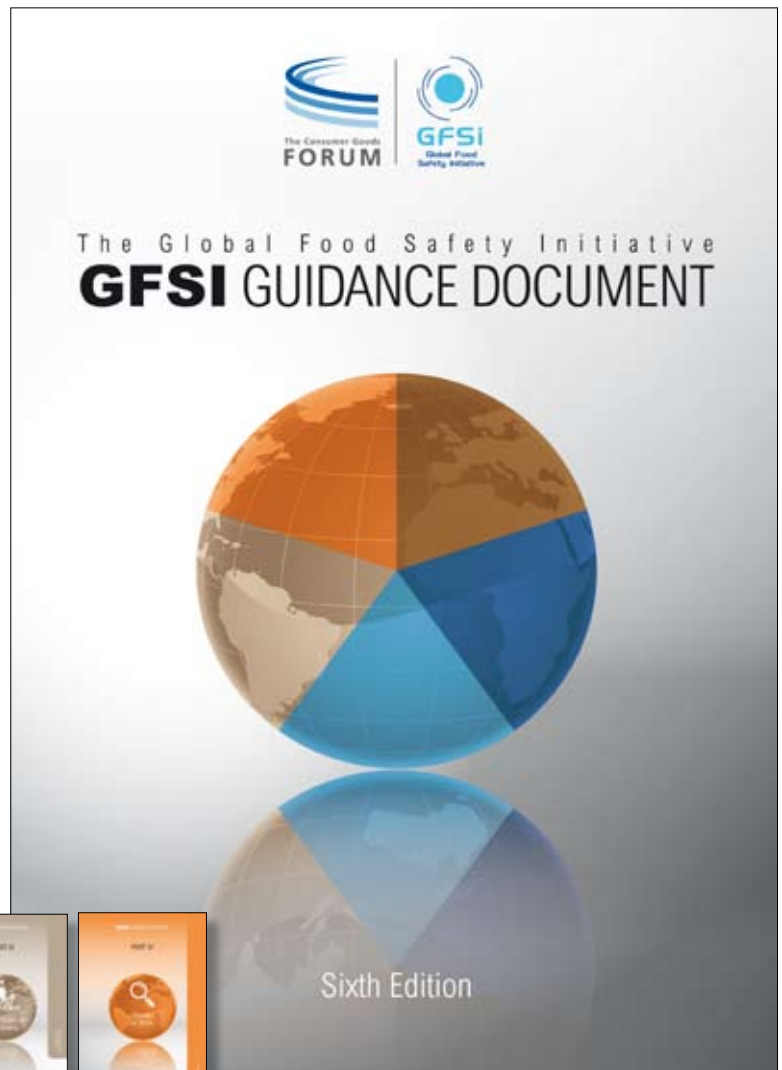
Guidance Document

This working group continues to draft documents to support the release of the Guidance Document and the formation of the benchmarking committees. In May they drafted applicant selection procedures, procedures for the handling of enquiries and a benchmarking committee training programme.

PACKAGING AND ANIMAL CONVERSION: PROVIDING AN INTEGRATED SUPPLY CHAIN APPROACH THROUGH THE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT SIXTH EDITION

When GFSI issued the sixth edition of its Guidance Document in January 2011, one of its key aspects was its flexibility in Part III of being able to provide, over time, key elements for a full supply chain approach to food and feed safety. The document released in January included scopes covering the primary production of animals and plants and several sections relating to the production of food and other food ingredients and additives. The GFSI Board has issued a workplan, indicating the priority scopes of focus between 2011 and 2014.

Technical Working Groups were formed in February 2011 to cover the first two priority scopes of Production of Food Packaging (scope M in the GFSI Guidance Document Sixth Edition) and Pre-Processing Handling of Animal Products (Scope C). Over the past five months they have held two physical meetings and numerous conference calls, and the resulting documents, containing key elements that shall be in place for the recognition of packaging and animal handling food safety requirements by the GFSI in the GFSI Guidance Document, were released for consultation in May and June. The documents will be released as an annex to the GFSI Guidance Document, and upon this publication, schemes containing packaging and animal handling requirements will be able to come to GFSI for benchmarking against those scopes of recognition, as well as any other scope of recognition already defined in Guidance Document Sixth Edition Part III.



GFSI Departure

Please note that after 11 years serving GFSI, the last five of which as Executive Director, Catherine François has decided to pursue other career opportunities and left GFSI on 30th June 2011.



All enquiries should be sent to gfsinfo@theconsumergoodsforum.com

GLOBAL MARKETS CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

After three years of collaboration between food safety industry experts from the retail, manufacturing, food service and certification sector as well as academia and international organizations, GFSI has launched its Global Markets Capacity Building Programme.

In 2008, GFSI stakeholders identified the need for technical assistance and support for "small and/or less developed businesses" in the development of their food safety management systems. "Small and/or less developed businesses" (SLDBs) refers to the status of the business' food safety management systems, thereby particularly addressing businesses who encounter difficulties in implementing HACCP within their business, rather than to the number of staff or volume of production.

In response the GFSI Board approved the formation of a Technical Working Group to develop voluntary food safety requirements in the form of a checklist and a protocol to drive a continuous improvement process in food safety management systems. The programme's objective is to facilitate market access locally, create mutual acceptance along the supply chain and provide a framework for supplier mentoring.

THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT APPROACH TO CERTIFICATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

Phase 1: A self-assessment is carried out by the business against Basic and/or Intermediate level requirements to allow the business to decide its entry level to the programme. Subject to the outcome of the self-assessment, the business should pass to either phase 2 (Basic Level Assessment), phase 3 (Intermediate Level Assessment), or phase 4 (certification against a GFSI recognised scheme).

Phase 2: An unaccredited assessment of a supplier is carried out against the Basic Level Requirements. The technical requirements at this level are comprised of 30% of the key elements of the GFSI Guidance Document, including Food Safety Systems, Good Manufacturing/Agricultural Practices and Control of Food Hazards.

Phase 3: An unaccredited assessment of a supplier is carried out against Intermediate Level Requirements, which include the Basic Level Requirements, a further 40% of the GFSI Guidance Document elements, and the Codex Alimentarius Standard CAC/RCP 1-1969 Rev 4-2003.

Both steps are voluntary, meaning that the supplier can decide at which entry level he will start: Basic or Intermediate.

Phase 4: The official accredited certification against one of the GFSI recognised standards.

Pilot projects have been carried out over the course of the development of the food safety requirements in Ukraine, Egypt, USA, Chile, Mexico, and China in order to ensure that they have been set at the right level. Results of these pilot projects to date have supported the level at which the basic and intermediate level requirements are set.

To download the Global Markets Capacity Building Programme, please visit www.mygfsi.com.



GFSI IN CHINA

CCFA 7th Annual Food Safety Conference, April 2011 "New Ideas, New opportunities"

More than 280 local food safety experts attended this event organised by China Chain Store & Franchise Association (CCFA) in cooperation with GFSI. Together the organisations would like to strengthen links with local retailers, manufacturers and service providers to identify the needs of the Chinese marketplace. The event will also promote discussion on key food safety issues to

identify future work items to add to the GFSI agenda and provide the local industry with case studies where GFSI has been implemented. There is opportunity and indeed the need for involvement of Chinese companies in ongoing and new GFSI projects, such as the Global Markets programme.

GFSI SPEAKERS:

- ▶ **Yves Rey**, Corporate Quality General Manager, Danone, France and Vice Chair of GFSI Board
- ▶ **Catherine François**, Director, Food Safety Programmes, GFSI / The Consumer Goods Forum
- ▶ **Kevin Chen**, Senior Vice President of China Resources Retail Group / COO of China Resources Vanguard, COO of China Resources Vanguard, China & GFSI Board Member
- ▶ **Zaotian Wan**, VP COFCO, China & GFSI Board Member
- ▶ **Kevin Swoffer**, GFSI Technical Working Groups Chairman
- ▶ **Jan Kranghand**, Managing Director of Star Farm and QA Director, METRO JINJIANG CASH & CARRY CO.
- ▶ **Mark Overland**, Director, Global Certification, Cargill, USA
- ▶ Invited speaker from Certification and Accreditation Administration of P.R. China (CNCA)



CCFA 7th FOOD SAFETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**NEW IDEAS
NEW OPPORTUNITIES**
13th-15th, April 2011
Hangzhou, China



CCFA has a long-standing partnership with GFSI
CCFA - China Chain Store & Franchise Association,
China's leading representative of retail chains and franchise chains.
www.mygfsi.com / www.chinaretail.org

Meeting with local companies and officials



GFSI/COFCO WORKSHOP – 18TH APRIL 2011 BEIJING

Participants: GFSI team and COFCO group headed by Mr Zao Tian WAN, COFCO VP & GFSI board member

As a leading Chinese food manufacturer, COFCO are interested in implementing the GFSI principles into the way they manage food safety along their food supply chain. Kevin Swoffer gave a detailed introduction to the current GFSI technical working groups work, while Yves Rey, Danone, Jan Kranghand, Metro and Mark Overland, Cargill presented how their companies had implemented GFSI recognised schemes in their supply chains in order to provide better understanding to COFCO regarding the benefits of GFSI.

Meeting News on COFCO official website:

http://www.cofco.com/cn/about_cofco/press_list.aspx



GFSI/CNCA MEETING – 19TH APRIL 2011 BEIJING

Participants: GFSI team and CNCA group headed by Mr Wenyi CHE – Deputy Administrator of CNCA

Continue discussion and working on the collaboration between GFSI and CNCA.

Meeting News on CNCA official website:

<http://www.cnca.gov.cn/cnca/zwx/xwdt/tpxw/403133.shtml>



2011 INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON FOOD SAFETY BEIJING – 19-22 APRIL

This event, co-hosted by the International Union of Food Science and Technology and the Chinese Institute of Food Science and Technology, attracted nearly 400 participants from 35 countries. Kevin Swoffer, GFSI Technical Working Groups Chairman, presented on 'Advancing Food Safety Through Collaboration'. Professor Junshi Chen, Senior Research Professor, Institute of Nutrition and Food Safety – Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention encouraged the implementation of GFSI to provide a new solution to current food safety issues in China

<http://www.ifofs.org/cn/index.html>



THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FOOD SAFETY PEAK FORUM (BEIJING) – 21-22 APRIL

Yves Rey, GFSI Board Vice Chair & Danone Corporate Quality General Manager, presented to more than 800 participants along the theme of 'Whole Process control of the Industry Chain'. This event aims to promote better management of every link of the industry chain, to ensure the quality and safety of food production. It also aims to establish process management and control systems, thus minimizing food safety risks and providing a stable, standardized and scientific operating mechanism for the entire food industry.



<http://www.food2011.com/english/index.php>

GFSI EVENTS

The GFSI Focus Day – Latin America will take place:

2nd September 2011 / 10am – 4:30pm

Maksoud Plaza / Alameda Campinas, 150 - 01404-900,
São Paulo, Brasil



▶▶▶ <http://brazil.tcgffoodsafety.com>

GFSI Focus Day – Latin America

The GFSI Focus Day aims to provide Latin-American stakeholders in the food industry an opportunity to find out more about the Global Food Safety Initiative but it will also serve as a unique moment for networking and knowledge exchange. Attendees at the day can expect to hear more on:

- ▶ What is GFSI?
- ▶ What are the benefits of GFSI?
- ▶ What are the GFSI recognized schemes?
- ▶ What is the process to comply with GFSI's guidelines?
- ▶ Is it accessible to small producers and manufacturers?
- ▶ How can we achieve: "Once certified, accepted everywhere"?

What does it mean?

- ▶ How can GFSI help me boost my business?
- ▶ How do case studies showcase the benefits of GFSI?

The GFSI Focus Day was initiated to address those Frequently Asked Questions about the initiative and its activities around the world. After Asia (Japan, China) and North America (the US), Brazil was chosen as the first stop in Latin America to raise awareness around the benefits of GFSI as the demand for primary and processed goods from this region of the world has grown significantly over the past years.

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The Japan Food Safety Day will take place:

11th October 2011 / 10am – 4:30pm

Hotel Okura Tokyo / 2-10-4 Toranomon, Minato-ku,
Tokyo 105-0001, Japan



▶▶▶ <http://www.tcgfjp.org./foodsafetyday2011>

Food Safety Day – Japan

The fourth Food Safety Day to take place in Tokyo will continue to allow local food safety experts to:

- ▶ Exchange current international thinking and knowledge on food safety with food safety peers
- ▶ Learn from speakers who come from global retailer and manufacturing companies who will share their experiences.
- ▶ Get the latest updates on the Global Food Safety Initiative and learn about the added value and benefits of working with this programme.

CONFERENCE COLUMN

Are You a Food Safety Manager or a Food Safety Leader?



If someone were to ask you, are you a food safety manager or food safety leader, what would your answer be?

Think about it. In the field of food safety today, we often talk about food safety management. We rarely talk about food safety leadership. But management and leadership are different. A manager's job is to oversee and optimize organizational processes to deliver results. A leader's job is to change the process to deliver even greater results.

Before we go much further, I should note that in today's business world, the word management is often implied to be inferior to the word leadership. Most business books these days are about leadership. Companies talk about leadership. Politicians emphasize leadership. And there are numerous seminars and conferences on the topic of leadership.

However, I do not believe that one term (management or leadership) is inferior or superior to the other. They're just different. In fact, in the field of food safety, we need both – good food safety management and more food safety leadership – as they are both critical to protecting public health.

Again, my intention is not to be critical of food safety management systems or effective food safety managers. However, I am suggesting that in order to make dramatic reductions in the global burden of foodborne disease, food safety management is not enough. We also need more food safety leadership.

Accordingly, let me quickly share three important differences between food safety management and food safety leadership.

1. Food safety management focuses on the administration of set procedures within an established risk management system; food safety leadership focuses on the creation of new, science-based, and more effective risk reduction strategies, models, and processes. This quote by Stephen Covey illustrates this point quite well. He said, "Management works in the system; leadership works on the system." Food Safety managers deal with planning, directing, and overseeing specific details of the existing system or program. In contrast, food safety leaders see the need for improvement, create a compelling vision for change, and inspire innovation, all which lead to even greater reductions in foodborne disease.

2. Food safety management relies on formal authority to accomplish its objectives; food safety leadership relies on the ability to influence others to achieve success. Traditionally, food safety managers coerce others to comply because they have authority over them or their operation. In other words, they get others to comply by holding people and organizations accountable. Food safety leaders, in contrast, get others to do the right thing not because they're being held accountable, but because they've been able to influence them to want to do so. They help others become responsible for food safety – not just accountable for food safety. There is a big difference between the two.

3. Food safety management involves working with others based on functional roles; food safety leadership involves working with others in a collaborative manner. Food safety managers work with others in traditional ways to accomplish their objectives. Often times, whether visible or not, they're protecting their organization's interests whether it be academia, regulatory, or industry. In contrast, food safety leaders seek genuine win-win solutions for all stakeholders. They recognize they can do more to advance food safety by working constructively with others than by working alone.

So, if asked, are you a food safety manager or food safety leader, I hope your answer is – both!

In closing, I want to encourage you to start making plans now to attend the Global Food Safety Conference in Orlando, Florida on February 15-17, 2012. The theme of next year's conference will be Advancing Global Food Safety through Collaboration. By attending, you'll be able to learn from experts from around the world as we work collaboratively with all GFSI stakeholders to help lead the way to the future of a safer global food supply.

Frank Yiannas

Vice President - Food Safety
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Global Food Safety Conference

Download the executive summary from the 2011 Global Food Safety Conference in London.



▶▶▶ [Download here](#)

GFSI AROUND THE WORLD

Ozark Food Processors Association 6th April 2011, Arkansas USA

Rena Pierami, Vice President, Auditing, Silliker Global Certification Services presented 'GFSI: Ensuring Safety through Accreditation and Certification'. After providing an overview of GFSI, Rena explained how GFSI works to incorporate industry stakeholders, how the GFSI Guidance Document provides the basis for benchmarking and the delivery of the schemes and highlighted the differences between 2nd party audits and 3rd party certification.

The Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference

13th and 14th April 2011, La Crosse USA

Payton Pruet, GFSI Board Member and Vice President, Corporate Food Technology & Regulatory Compliance for Kroger presented in a session entitled 'GFSI - A New Marketplace Expectation'. His presentation to this audience of more than 1,200 cheese industry leaders from around the USA focused on how GFSI raises the bar on food safety performance.

Yum! Brands Headquarters 19th May 2011, Dallas USA

As GFSI continues to build awareness of its activities and work, Mike Liewen, VP Global Quality Assurance for YUM! Brands and newest GFSI Board member invited Catherine François, Director of Food Safety Programmes and GFSI and Kevin Swoffer, GFSI Technical Working Groups Chairman to present the latest GFSI developments to his team of QA experts.

Institute for Food Technologists Annual Meeting

13th June 2011, New Orleans, USA

Dr. Tatiana Lorca, Manager, Food Safety Education and Training for Ecolab's Food & Beverage Division presented in a session entitled 'GFSI - Improvement, Analytics and Successes'. Her presentation focused on GFSI as the driver to achieve harmonization of food safety management schemes through a benchmarking process, improving cost efficiency throughout the food supply chain and providing an international stakeholder platform

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GFSI: EMERGING SITUATIONS RESPONSE

E. Coli Outbreak

Escherichia coli, – as known as E. coli – was discovered by German pediatrician and bacteriologist Theodor Escherich in 1885. Ironically, the current major E. coli outbreak that is unprecedentedly shaking Europe originated from the North of Germany. Beginning of May, after unfairly causing an overnight damage to the Spanish fruits and vegetable industry with an estimated 225 million Euros loss, the bacteria was also accountable for 46 deaths in Germany where the source has been traced to a vegetable sprout farm. And German health experts estimated that about 100 patients with damaged kidneys will need transplants or life-long dialysis. One person was also killed by the bacteria in Sweden and the death of a man from Arizona, U.S.A. who recently visited Germany could be linked to the outbreak.

A month later, 3920 contamination cases have been counted in 15 countries, and the panic continues spreading.

In France, early July, one of the 8 people hospitalized in Bordeaux died, according to the French Ministry of Health. Six of those victims have reported having eaten sprouts during an open house at a children's recreation center.



The French Directorate General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control linked the source of the seeds for the incriminated sprouts of fenugreek, mustard and arugula to a British supplier. However «The link between symptoms and the consumption of these seeds is not definitively established to date.» said officials from the French economy & commerce ministry.

Today more than ever traceability and technology play an important role in the detection of an outbreak and the race against the clock to stop it. This epidemic is a case study that demonstrates that harmonization is truly a global matter that concerns all actors of the supply chain. Better public health sector coordination as well as cooperation between public and private sector are also key in advancing food safety globally.

Early May Spanish cucumbers were mistakenly blamed for the E. Coli outbreak, causing an estimated 225 million Euros loss. Since then The European Commission has offered 210 Million Euros to European farmers to compensate for the loss of income.

What is E. coli?

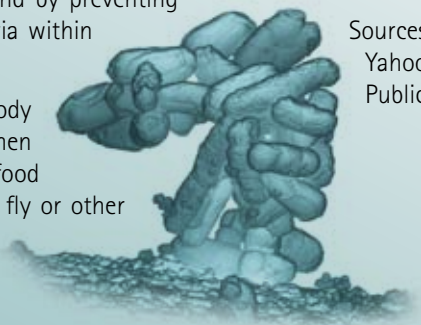
The primary bacterial indicator used for assessment of microbial contamination of water consists of the coliform group. Coliform bacteria are universally present in high numbers in the feces of warm-blooded animals, including humans, and can be detected even after considerable dilution.

Escherichia coli – commonly abbreviated E. coli – is one of the most common coliform bacteria types that normally inhabits the stomach and intestines. Most E. coli strains are harmless, they are part of the normal flora of the gut, and can benefit their hosts by producing vitamin K2, and by preventing the establishment of pathogenic bacteria within the intestine.

Cells are able to survive outside the body for a limited amount of time and when E. coli is consumed in water, milk, or food or is transmitted through the bite of a fly or other insect, it can cause gastrointestinal

illness. Mutations can lead to strains that cause diarrhea by giving off toxins, invading the intestinal lining, or sticking to the intestinal wall and are occasionally responsible for product recalls.. Therapy for gastrointestinal illness consists largely of fluid replacement, though specific drugs are effective in some cases. The illness is usually self-limiting, with no evidence of long-lasting effects. However, one dangerous strain causes bloody diarrhea, kidney failure, and death in extreme cases. Proper cooking of meat and washing of produce can prevent infection from contaminated food sources.

Sources: Le Monde – CNN – Direct – Wikipedia – Yahoo! Health – BBC News – Gale Encyclopedia of Public Health – Britannica Concise Encyclopedia



JULY 31-AUGUST 3
IAFP ANNUAL 2011 MEETING
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Combining GFSI Recognised Schemes with those Related to the Environment, Health & Safety and Quality

There are many advantages in implementing a Food Safety Managements System (FSMS) based on a GFSI recognised scheme. One of them is the creation of a continuous improvement culture based on a process approach. As the food chain organizations implement such systems, they have the opportunity to improve their own processes. This will allow outlining the current processes, and the requirements of the food safety standards, and then optimizing these processes with permanent inputs from the internal processes users and from external parts, including requirements from statutory and regulatory authorities. As the systems are implemented, processes and product safety awareness tend to increase because all involved staff must be permanently trained on GFSI Scheme requirements.

All GFSI recognised schemes are strongly based on application of current Good Manufacturing Practices and principles of HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points). But we know that GMP and HACCP alone can't survive for a long time without the support of a consistent Management System that will allow the maintenance and improvement of these food safety key elements. Management system requirements typically involve primordial features like: definition of policies and objectives, top management responsibilities and awareness, management review, resources provision, establishment and control of a documentation system, corrective and preventive actions and internal audits. The certification of FSMS against a GFSI recognised scheme by an independent certification body allows the organization to demonstrate that all these requirements are in place

and that the organization plans, implements, operates, maintains and updates a food safety management system aimed at providing products that, according to their intended use, are safe for the consumers, demonstrates compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory food safety requirements and complies with customer requirements.



But we know that achieving a GFSI recognised food safety certification is just one of the many certifications that an organisation operating in the food chain may be able to prove it holds. In addition to the many different international standards in the area of food safety and quality management, there are also certifications for environmental and health & safety systems that are many times required from different interested parties. Further to this, organisations often need audits relating to the specific requirements of their operations. To manage each of the required audits and certifications individually can be a time consuming and costly process. Added to this, the audits frequently cover similar areas, so an individual area of an organisation's operations may find that it is constantly embarking on periods of auditing if each audit is performed separately. The scheme below shows some similarities of a GFSI recognised scheme (for example FSSC 22000) with other management system standards.

Management System Requirements	FSSC 22000 (ISO 22000)	ISO 9001	ISO 14001	OHSAS 18001
Management System	Section 4	Section 4	Clauses 4.1, 4.4.4, 4.4.5 e 4.5.4	Clauses 4.1, 4.4.4, 4.4.5 e 4.5.4
Top Management Responsibility	Section 5	Section 5	Clauses 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4.1, 4.4.3 e 4.6	Clauses 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4.1, 4.4.3 e 4.6
Resources Management	Section 6	Section 6	Clauses 4.4.1 e 4.4.2	Clauses 4.4.1 e 4.4.2
Operational and Production Controls	Section 7	Section 7	Clauses 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.4, 4.4.3 e 4.4.6	Clauses 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.4, 4.4.3 e 4.4.6
Validation, verification and Continuous Improvement	Section 8	Section 8	Clauses 4.5	Clauses 4.5

Hence a customised single audit of Integrated Management Systems can combine both the audit against a GFSI recognised scheme with the environmental and health & safety audits the organisation requires. This eliminates the issue of more than one audit system being required to cover an organisation's operations. For example, at the same time as an organisation is audited for the GFSI recognised FSSC 22000 it can also be audited against quality, environmental, health and safety management system standards

and even others like social accountability. The implementation of integrated management system is an increasing trend and organizations shall be able to respond by optimizing their process and related management system implementation and verification costs.

For more information email food@sgs.com.



GFSI FOCUS DAY LATIN AMERICA

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Share Knowledge and Network with
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From Latin America

2nd September 2011
Maksoud Plaza - Sao Paulo
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GFSI SPONSOR: LRQA

Auditor Competency Drives Audit Integrity

Cor Groenveld, Global Product Manager Food Services – Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance (LRQA)

The 2011 Global Food Safety Conference in London was proof that food organisations, large and small, are all reaching the same conclusion on certification; it's about a lot more than the piece of paper on the wall. In a survey conducted prior to the stakeholder meeting, 19% of the respondents selected "auditor competency" as the single most important issue over the next five years, making it the #1 issue in terms of importance to the industry.

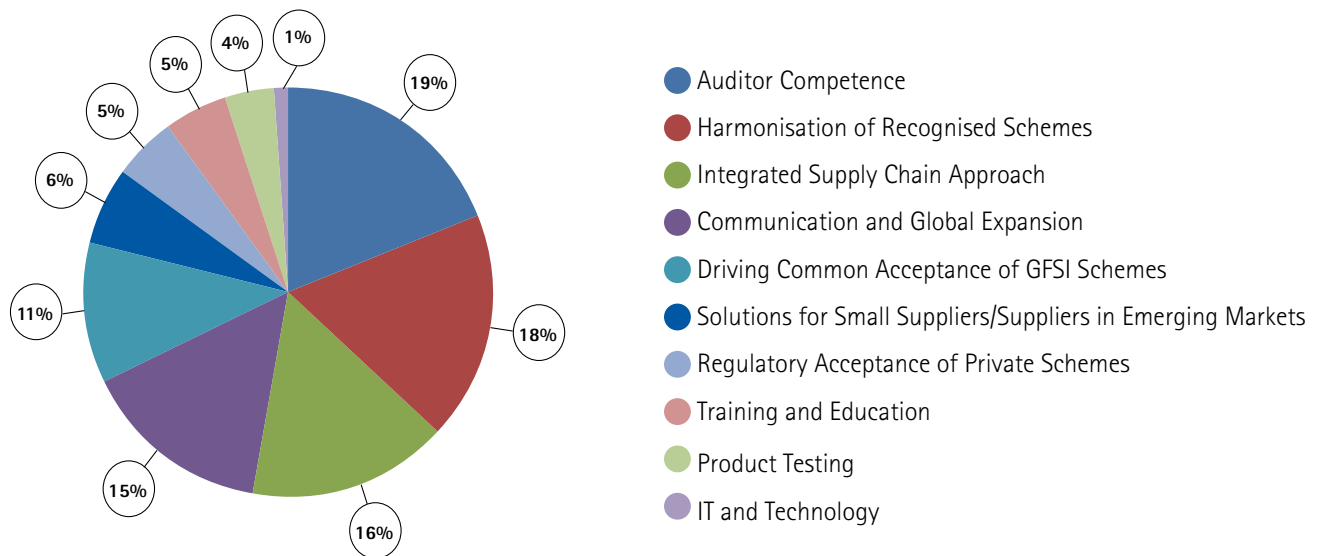


Figure 1 – What are the 3 critical areas that GFSI should focus on in the next five years? (Source GFSI Stakeholder Meeting 2011)

At LRQA, we agree and welcome a shift towards ensuring that certification (including both the assessment methodology and the people conducting the audits) helps organisations minimise risks, improve systems and processes and delivers confidence for stakeholders throughout the food supply chain.

To be able to do that effectively and efficiently, auditors need to understand the business they are assessing. Put simply, if an auditor is assessing a meat factory, that individual should have the knowledge and/or experience in the meat industry. It is not enough for that auditor to have worked in some other part of the food supply chain. We understand that this presents certification bodies with a resource dilemma. There are only so many auditors with experience in each of the sub-industries that make up the food supply chain. But, we believe it is essential to have sector-specific auditors, ones with enough training (both before they start assessing and, equally as important, once they are out in the field delivering audits). It is this, coupled with a process-based management systems approach – rather than the traditional 'tick box' audit – that will deliver value to organisations by helping them to meet the needs and expectations of their stakeholders.



For LRQA, we are continuing to invest in our people and processes to ensure that we continue to deliver independent, robust assessment underpinned with best-in class auditor competency to help organisations meet the needs and expectations of their stakeholders. It is this approach – simply called LRQA Business Assurance – that will help to drive trust and integrity on two key levels; from organisations towards the certification industry and from consumers towards the food industry through increased brand reputation. Organisations across the supply chain, including some of the world's leading manufacturers and retailers are increasingly recognising the benefits of independent certification, not only in terms of the costs, but also in terms of the benefits and value it brings. On the road to improving food supply chain assurance, this is an important step.

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