

# OVERVIEW

The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) brings together food safety experts from throughout the industry to identify the best food safety management practices across the agri-food supply-chain, and then to encourage the auditing and certification of those practices at food facilities worldwide to provide **“Safe Food for Consumers, Everywhere.”** The Initiative is governed by a Board of directors made up of 20 members drawn from major retailers, manufacturers, producers, and food service operators, among others.

Today, GFSI’s **global partners** audit and certify more than **100,000 food operations** and facilities in **160 countries** annually and the numbers continue to grow. These include fish processing plants in Norway, avocado operations in Mexico, poultry processing plants in the United States, spice producers in India, and others throughout the world.

Certification to a GFSI-recognized food safety management scheme facilitates market access and growth within the highly competitive food marketplace as well as compliance with government food safety requirements.

### BENEFITING BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT AND CONSUMERS

GFSI benefits consumers, governments and businesses by:

- Openly developing and sharing best management practices for food safety across supply networks;
- Encouraging companies to meet the high performance standards of the global industry rather than conform to minimum food safety practices leading to an increased risk of food safety incidents;
- Encouraging the consolidation of customer certification requirements into a single, annual process, greatly reducing staff time and facility costs;
- Developing a network of reliable suppliers and helping to facilitate supply-chain accountability that both customers and consumers demand, and
- Helping companies comply with government food safety requirements.

### GFSI IS A GLOBAL MARK OF DISTINCTION

To food retailers, manufacturers and their suppliers, certification to a GFSI-recognized scheme is a **global mark of distinction** representing the best in food safety management practices.

Some of the most well-known and widely respected food companies in the world have certified their operations to GFSI-recognized schemes as well as required their suppliers to become certified, too. Yet, it is small, local businesses and producers that benefit the most from GFSI, acquiring the necessary food safety tools they often lack to produce safe food that meets these same high standards. Certification enhances the safety and marketability of their products as well as helps them to expand their businesses.

### PROVIDING A CRITICAL FOOD SAFETY FRAMEWORK

Industry, government and consumers each play a vital role in ensuring food safety. Food processors and producers, in particular, must ensure their products remain safe through each phase of production, processing and distribution. The rapid expansion of local supply-chains into regional, national and even global networks reinforces this need.

The best way for food companies to provide safe food to consumers is through the adoption of best management practices, audited and verified at each stage of the production process. Through its recognized schemes, GFSI provides this critical framework for agricultural producers and transporters, food processors and packagers, food retailers and food-service establishments worldwide, regardless of size or location.



**77,000 factories** certified to GFSI schemes



**150,000 farms** certified to GFSI schemes



**10** recognized food safety management schemes



**5** local groups implement GFSI's global network regionally



**Over 100 companies** have collaborated in GFSI's technical working groups



**Over 15,000 stakeholders** follow GFSI around the world

In today's highly networked world, one ingredient, one pathogen can adversely affect consumers and businesses in communities and countries around the world.

Through GFSI, we can reduce food safety risks and protect consumers.

For example, much of the food that consumers enjoy is produced locally or regionally within their own communities. Increasingly, however, this food comes from countries with far different food safety practices and standards. Certification to uniform, global standards, such as those from GFSI-recognized schemes, provides assurance that the same demanding requirements for food safety are being met consistently in markets around the world.

### GFSI ORIGINS AND SCHEMES

Food retailers and manufacturers created GFSI in 2000, with the support of agricultural producers, food-service establishments, packagers, transporters and warehouse operators, among others. As retailers and food manufacturers expanded, GFSI quickly grew with them to become the global initiative that it is today, operating in over 160 countries.

GFSI benchmarks accredited food safety management schemes (private standards organizations) against a set of requirements developed by food industry experts. Schemes that meet those requirements are recognized by GFSI.

Certification against any of the GFSI-recognized schemes shows that a facility is following industry best practices that help reduce food safety risks. Buying companies are therefore encouraged to accept certificates issued during third-party audits against any of the recognized schemes

### FOOD SAFETY PROFESSIONALS WORLDWIDE ENDORSE GFSI

The findings of a recent GFSI survey of food safety professionals at certified facilities around the world reinforce the many benefits of GFSI:

- **72%** of food safety professionals say GFSI has enhanced food safety practices at their facilities;
- **61%** say GFSI has improved their ability to produce safe food;
- **90%** say GFSI has helped to increase employee food safety knowledge, and
- **68%** say GFSI is helping to prepare them for forthcoming regulatory changes.

72% of food safety professionals say they would choose to become certified to a GFSI-recognized scheme if they weren't certified already.

### GLOBAL INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) is a non-profit organization that brings together food safety experts from around the world to identify the best food safety management practices across the agri-food supply-chain, and then to encourage the auditing and certification of those practices at food facilities worldwide to provide "Safe Food for Consumers Everywhere."

GFSI maintains offices within CGF's Paris headquarters as well as in Tokyo, Beijing and Washington, D.C. Over 20,000 food safety executives and professionals around the world follow GFSI through its LinkedIn site as well as through Twitter @mygfsi and the GFSI website, [www.mygfsi.com](http://www.mygfsi.com).

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The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) is facilitated by the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF), a global, parity-based industry network, driven by its members. It encourages the global adoption of practices and standards that serves the consumer goods industry worldwide. It brings together the CEOs and senior management of some 400 retailers, manufacturers, service providers, and other stakeholders across 70 countries. Its member companies have combined sales of EUR 2.5 trillion and directly employ nearly 10 million people, with a further 90 million related jobs estimated along the value chain. It is governed by its Board of Directors, which comprises 50 manufacturer and retailer CEOs. For more information, please visit: [www.theconsumergoodsforum.com](http://www.theconsumergoodsforum.com). Contact us at [gfsinfo@theconsumergoodsforum.com](mailto:gfsinfo@theconsumergoodsforum.com).