



TIP SHEET 2 - FOODSERVICE

GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE

With a vision of safe food for consumers everywhere, food industry leaders, including the Safe Quality Food (SQF) Institute’s parent company, the Food Marketing Institute, created the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) in 2000 to find collaborative solutions to collective concerns, notably to reduce food safety risks, audit duplication and costs while building trust throughout the supply chain.

The GFSI community works on a volunteer basis and is composed of the world’s leading food safety experts from retail, manufacturing and food service companies, as well as international organizations, governments, academia and service providers to the global food industry.

Certification to a GFSI-recognized certification program, such as SQFI is achieved through a successful third-party audit conducted by a certification body licensed by SQFI against the GFSI-recognized certification programs.¹

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	APPLICABLE CODE ELEMENT
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- SUMMARIZE THE ROLE OF GFSI
- DESCRIBE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION
- UNDERSTAND THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SQFI AND GFSI

- INTRODUCTION

KEY TERMS

- GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE
An industry initiative established by the international trade association, the Consumer Goods Forum.

- CERTIFICATION
Issuing a certificate of registration to a site by a certification body after the successful completion of a certification or re-certification audit.

¹ Global Food Safety Initiative website - mygfsi.com.



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○ ACCREDITATION

Verification by an accreditation body of a certification body confirming they meet and continue to meet requirements established by SQFI.

○ BENCHMARK

To measure (something) against a standard (Dictionary.com).

SUMMARY

1. The problem
 - a. In 2000, food safety was a top concern for companies and consumers due to several high-profile recalls, quarantines and negative publicity about the food industry.
 - b. There was also extensive audit fatigue among manufacturers throughout the industry, as retailers performed inspections or audits themselves or asked a third party to do this on their behalf. These were often carried out against food safety schemes that lacked international certification and accreditation, resulting in incomparable auditing results.
2. The solution
 - a. CEOs of global companies, including the SQF Institute's parent, the Food Marketing Institute, came together at The Consumer Goods Forum and agreed that consumer trust needed to be strengthened and maintained through a safer supply chain. GFSI was created to achieve this through the harmonization of food safety standards that would reduce audit duplication throughout the supply chain. At the time, there was no existing scheme that could be qualified as "global" that could be adopted by all. GFSI therefore chose to go down the route of benchmarking, developing a model that determines equivalency between existing food safety schemes, while leaving flexibility and choice in the marketplace.
 - b. Benchmarking
 - i. Benchmarking is a process by which a food safety certification program is compared to the GFSI Requirements Document to determine equivalence.
 - ii. The criteria against which certification programs are benchmarked are outlined in the GFSI Requirements Document. Any programs that are recognized against GFSI have to have as a minimum the same requirements that can be found in the Requirements Document.
 - iii. This process of benchmarking against a set of industry-developed criteria provides a high degree of confidence that food safety management systems are adequately designed, implemented and maintained.



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- c. Certification versus accredited certification
 - i. The terms accreditation and certification are often confused, and the term certification is often used incorrectly.
 - ii. Certification means a formal recognition by a certification body (CB) of a site's SQF System as complying with the SQF Code following a certification audit or re-certification audit.
 - iii. Accreditation means a formal recognition by an accreditation body confirming that the management system of a certification body complies with the ISO 17065 (these are General Requirements for Bodies who operate a product certification system) and that the CB is suitable to be granted a license to provide the Service in the Territory and that the CB is suitable to continue to provide the service.
 - iv. Simply put a certification body certifies a site and an accreditation body accredits a CB.
 - v. With the accredited third-party certification model used by GFSI, additional layers off accountability are added to the process.
 - vi. So while a CB still audits the site against a standard, the standard is one that has been benchmarked against a set of criteria created by the industry.
 - vii. The CB has their certification practices accredited by an accreditation body against a set of internationally recognized criteria - ISO 17065 (in the case of SQF) and ISO 17011.
 - viii. This assessment also includes an audit of the auditors against the certification program owner's and GFSI criteria for auditors.
 - ix. Essentially, assurances as well as checks and balances are added to the entire certification process. Additionally, there is consistency and the audit results can be compared from one site to another so that true impact on food safety and quality can be measured.

3. The benefits

- a. Sites can benefit from the concept of "safe food for everyone everywhere," as the certificates gained from an audit to any GFSI recognized certification program are accepted by many international and regional/national retailers, foodservice operations and other suppliers. Sites also benefit from a reduction in the number of audits.



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4. The value of GFSI
 - a. Several studies have been conducted demonstrating the value of GFSI-recognized certification, including:
 - i. Walmart: University of Arkansas Study shows safer food for consumers with a 31 per cent reduction in product recalls.
 - ii. Metro: 90 percent decrease of food product recalls in Germany.
 - iii. Migros: reduction of audits by 50 percent.
 - iv. Cargill: \$5 million/year in reduced redundant audit costs, estimated \$15 million/year savings once fully implemented.
 - v. Danone: € 4 million in reduced redundant audits costs the first year, further cost saving when fully implemented.
5. A summary of SQFI's history with GFSI.
 - a. SQFI has been involved with GFSI since its inception in 2000.
 - b. SQF was one of the original four benchmarked schemes (BRC, IFS, Dutch HACCP and SQF).
 - c. The SQF Code for manufacturing was benchmarked by GFSI in 2004.
 - d. The SQF Code for on the farm was benchmarked by GFSI in 2005.
 - e. SQF Code, 8th edition was benchmarked by GFSI in 2018.
 - f. SQFI continues to play a pro-active role in GFSI Technical Working Groups.

RELEVANT RESOURCES

- Global Food Safety Initiative
<https://www.mygfsi.com/>
- The GFSI Journey
https://youtu.be/W7_DW6ecKAQ
- GFSI Recognized Certification
https://www.mygfsi.com/files/Information_Kit/One-pagers/4_GFSI-Certification-One-pager-WEB.pdf
- GFSI Benchmarking & Recognition for Private Certification Programmes
https://www.mygfsi.com/files/Information_Kit/One-pagers/1_GFSI-Benchmarking-and-Recognition-WEB.pdf