

# **GLOBAL TRENDS IN FOOD SAFETY**

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**WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE**



- Food safety issues remain at the forefront of public attention much in part due to issues such as salmonella in tomatoes and peppers, melamine in milk and salmonella in peanuts
- Globalization and international trade have drastically changed the way that food is produced, processed, transported and consumed and present all stakeholders with new challenges to food safety and quality
- In today's age of the globalization and ever-increasing consumer awareness, there are ever escalating initiatives surrounding food quality and safety
- Food safety and quality programmes are increasingly focusing on a farm-to-fork approach as a way of reducing food borne hazards entering the food chain

# SGS | HISTORY

- In the 90's we saw the wider adoption of a risk-based approach to food safety through Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems as a basis for underpinning food safety
- In the past decade we have seen the greater adoption of the Farm-to-Fork approach which has led to the adoption of Good Farming and Processing Practices
- Today there is a growing number of public and private incentives designed to improve food safety and quality and bring more control on the food chain
- Globally governments are changing the way they regulate and control the food chain
- Producers and manufacturers supply to many buyers in many markets and there is the potential for multiple standards

**NOW ISN'T THE  
TIME TO TEST FOR  
MICROBIOLOGICAL  
CONTAMINATION**



- Consumers are changing their eating habits, focusing more on functional foods, health and diet as well as expanding their culinary tastes
- They seek fresher products often minimally processed foods or semi prepared foods that offer higher convenience
- Consumers are becoming more concerned about nutrition, taste, Free Range (“Freedom Food”) and Organic
- Even with the economic conditions, more consumers now eat out of the home which introduces an even longer and more complex food supply and consumption chain
- During these difficult economic conditions people appear to be buying more ingredients and less prepared whole meals



## THE CONSUMER EVOLUTION

- Today consumers are increasing their demand for companies to prove that appropriate systems are in place to ensure that food safety and quality are addressed
- The trends are that the food industry is being called on to ensure:
  - Balanced Value (Price vs Quality)
  - Confidence and Transparency
  - Consistency and predictability
  - Regulatory compliance
  - Adequate control over product recall and traceability
  - Above all else that the food consumers eat is safe

- In addition to food safety and quality issues we see a growing number of emerging trends:
  - Sustainability in Food Production
  - Protection of the Environment
  - Animal welfare
  - Food Security (Terrorism Related)

- Organizations are being forced to take even more ownership for food safety and to protect their brands
- Tighter controls are being established to safeguard the food supply chain
- Traceability and integrated management programs are now an essential part of the food chain
- However problems remain and food safety and security concerns continue to increase globally
- Governments are tightening regulations, reducing MRL's (Maximum Residue Levels) and engaging more with Third Party Providers to gain more control on the food supply chain

- The food industry is being forced to establish a holistic and integrated approach with initiatives which target risks and have impact on the food safety and quality
- A holistic and integrated approach with a stronger drive by all stakeholders in the food industry to work closer together, developing initiatives that benefit all stakeholders
- This, more than ever, must include the public as well as the private sectors cooperating to ensure a safe food supply chain

- Initiatives such as the Global Food Safety Initiative has paved the way for uniformity in food standards
- The CIES through the Global Food Safety Initiative have succeeded to reduce the duplication of audits in the supply chain through common acceptance of four GFSI bench marked food safety standards
  - Retailers such as Carrefour, Tesco, Metro, Migros, Ahold, Wal-Mart and Delhaize all accept GFSI bench marked food safety standards
- In addition, retailers are driving initiatives to tackle sustainability, protection of the environment and animal welfare

- Many manufacturers still tend to consider one control in their food chain in anticipation that their manufacturing chain is under control and their food safety and quality issues adequately addressed
- This predominately is not the case, in fact there is a strong likelihood that a single control would not in fact mitigate risks to an acceptable level
- Many manufacturers often source raw materials from various suppliers and creating initiatives with suppliers can lead to safer and more consistent raw materials which supports the achievement of safer food products

- With consumers eating habits changing, their developing taste for more exotic flavors and fresher more natural products, we could expect to see increasing food safety issues
- If we look at recent world events with respect to tomatoes and peppers or even melamine in milk we must question if a single solution could have controlled the situation
- With globalization of food chain, farming can often be on the opposite side of the world to consumption and consumers are concerned as to the safety of the farming practices

- The overall trend continues to be tighter controls on the food supply chain by governments
  - EU – New rules on Maximum Residue Levels (MRL's) for pesticides will drive additional testing in Europe as well as exporting countries
  - China – new legislation is expected to open further opportunities
  - US government will invest in the FDA to substantially increase the number of food inspectors and modernize food safety labs
  - US FDA is changing its approach and engaging third parties to strengthen controls on the food chain
    - Voluntary Third-Party Certification Programs, Pilot for Imported Aquaculture Shrimp
    - Guidance for Industry for Voluntary Third-Party Certification Programs for Foods and Feeds



**NOW ISN'T THE TIME TO  
TEST FOR PESTICIDE  
RESIDUES**

# AN ILLUSTRATIVE **CASE STUDY**

WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE



- A retailer is selling imported “Ready to Eat, Frozen Meals” and as part of their Food Safety System their suppliers are assessed to their internal supplier assessment criteria, in the expectation that their products will comply to the relevant food safety requirements and ensure due diligence,
- The audit is conducted by a qualified and experienced assessor and barring a few minor non conformances, the supplier appears to have an effective Food Safety and Quality management system in place

**Has the retailer taken all due care and provided confidence that the product is safe?**

## AN ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDY

### THE INITIAL PROBLEM

- A considerable period after the audit, the supplier delivers a batch of products and soon after sale, the retailer has received a complaint that the product may have made a customer ill.
- Not seriously ill, but there appears that there may be a problem
- The retailer decides to have the product analyzed and higher than acceptable levels of microorganisms were identified
- The Retailer then decides that the supplier needs to be re-audited to review their food safety systems



## AN ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDY THE INITIAL RESULTS

- The investigation identifies that there was a breakdown in the partial cooking of the product as it was not maintained at the critical temperature for the required time, in order to kill off the microorganisms, due to human error
- The retailer then decides to expand their controls and requests the supplier to become certified to an international standard and the retailer implements a stricter auditing program to monitor the Food Safety system to assure that this incident can not recur

**Was this sufficient?**



## AN ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDY

### A SECOND PROBLEM

- As part of the expanded control system, random analysis of products for microorganisms and randomly checked for chemicals
- Analysis uncovers an unacceptable level of pesticides present in the vegetables used in the product
- The third party is then requested to investigate and identifies that pesticides were in vegetable used by the supplier



## THE QUESTION?

- Were there sufficient controls in place to protect:
  - The Consumer
  - The Market
  - Your Brand and
  - Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements?

**Possibly not, a single solution by it's self is no guarantee.  
Perhaps a combination of controls are needed to  
minimize potential risks, develop confidence and protect  
the consumer as well as the brand**

**NOW ISN'T THE  
TIME TO QUESTION  
WHAT'S IN THE  
CAN AND HOW  
SAFE IT IS**



- Whether it is pesticides in vegetables, microbes in raw materials or a breakdown in the food management system, hazards potentially exist that need to be minimized
- There is not one standalone control that has the ability to ensure that as far as possible food safety and quality hazards have been adequately addressed
- The food industry and all stakeholders must develop a holistic and integrated approach with initiatives which target risks and have impact on the food safety and quality
- A holistic and integrated approach, with cooperation between the public and private sectors, focused on developing initiatives that benefit all stakeholders

- To prove that **food safety and quality is managed** companies must ensure that their supply chain is secured and under appropriate controls
- Appropriate **controls must address key supply chain steps** where food safety and quality can potentially breakdown
- **Manufacturers** and **Producers** must become more open to auditing companies and together work to identify and solve food safety issues
- **Only holistic and integrated solutions, with multiple controls can provide the confidence** that food safety and quality are adequately addressed and **Consumer Confidence** is increased.

# IS IT TIME WE ALL **RE-THINK OUR OWN** **APPROACH** TO FOOD SAFETY?

**COOPERATION AND AN INTEGRATED APPROACH BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN  
THE FOOD INDUSTRY INCLUDING THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS  
THE ONLY ANSWER TO ENSURING A SAFER FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN**

WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

**SGS**



## WHO IS THE SGS GROUP

- Founded in 1878
- Head Office in Geneva, Switzerland
- More than 55,000 employees
  - Europe, Middle East & Africa: 25,300 employees
  - Americas: 12,600 employees
  - Asia/Pacific: 17,100 employees
- A network of over 1,000 offices & laboratories
- 2008 Sales CHF 4.8 Billion

**SGS is recognized as the global benchmark for the highest standards of expertise, quality and integrity**

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