

GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE (GFSI) INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

REPORT

April 2016

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides a summary of the GFSI Industry Discussion held on April 1/ 2016, in Toronto.

This report helps to identify:

- The challenges and needs of Ontario food processors concerning implementation of GFSI recognised food safety schemes.
- Opportunities for government and industry to support and assist processors so they may overcome the challenges.

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1. Meeting Objectives and Outcomes

- Learn how the food processors in Ontario are implementing GFSI recognized food safety schemes
- Identify needs and barriers/challenges faced by food processors when developing food safety and traceability systems
- Discuss solutions to overcome the challenges
- Identify government and industry roles to support/overcome these barriers/challenges (industry includes GFSI scheme owners and certification bodies)
- Understand how OMAFRA can provide support to the stakeholders

See [Appendix 1](#): Meeting Invitation

See [Appendix 2](#): Meeting Agenda

2. Meeting Date, Location and Participants

Date: April 1, 2016 – 10:00am to 3:00pm

Location: MacDonald Block at 900 Bay Street, Toronto, ON (Rideau room)

A total of 28 participants attended the meeting, including:

- Representatives from:
 - Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI): Karil Kochenderfer
 - British Retail Consortium (BRC): John Kukoly
 - Safe Quality Food (SQF): Frank Schreus
 - Food Safety System Certification 22000 (FSSC 22000): Jacqueline Southee
 - Certification Bodies:
 - ✓ SGS Canada: Maryana Glavan
 - ✓ Dicontra: Nancy MacLeod Grove
 - ✓ Intertek: Showkat Hussain
 - ✓ Silliker: Amy Perez
 - ✓ QMI-SAI Global: Julie Press
 - ✓ NSF-GFTC: Alan Grant
- BRC, SQF, and FSSC 22000 certified auditors: Yuksel Eyyuboglu, Nadia Narine and Felix Amiri
- BRC, SQF, and FSSC 22000 consultants: Oliden Herrera, Nena Velickovic, Gordana Halbreiner, Pius Gasser and Mike Nasser

- OMAFRA Staff:
 - Food Safety and Traceability Programs Branch (FSTPB): Sarah Wilson, Colleen McElwain, Nadean Kennedy, Amanda Culverwell, Sherisse Pascual, Valeria Netto
 - Business Development Branch (BDB): Art Zantinge, Greg Merlihan

3. Meeting Scope

In-scope	Out-of-scope
Discussion on implementation and certification under 3 GFSI schemes: BRC, SQF and FSSC 22000	Discussion on needs of other players in supply chain (e.g. distributors, retailers)
	Discussion on implementation and certification under a different GFSI scheme (i.e. Global Gap, CanadaGap)
Discussion on implementation, audit and certification needs and challenges faced by the food processors	Sharing of any business information with meeting participants.
	Consultations on current OMAFRA policies, regulations or other initiatives
	OMAFRA funding program

4. Group Discussion:

Discussion Topic: “Advancing GFSI Certification in Ontario”

- Participants were divided in 4 groups of 6
- Each group had an OMAFRA staff as table facilitator
- Each group represented both a different sector and stage of adoption of food safety and traceability programs
 - Sectors included dairy, meat, bakery/confectionary and fruits/vegetables
 - Stages of adoption of food safety and traceability programs included:
 - Early: no written programs in place
 - Advanced: written programs in place
- The groups discussed seven steps to achieve GFSI Certification. A Discussion Guidance document (see Appendix 3) was provided to participants.

5. Summary of Discussion Outcomes

A list of all topics/steps discussed by each one of the 4 groups can be found in [Appendix 4: Discussion Outcomes](#).

Below is a summary of the discussion outcomes, divided into identified challenges and proposed solutions.

Please note that the list of challenges is not exhaustive. It is limited to what was identified in the discussion, and the solutions are only proposed. OMAFRA may or may not use them.

Challenges:

- Need better communications with buyers/retailers on GFSI requirements
- Training/webinar comparing all GFSI food safety schemes (understand terminologies and standards)
- Lack of management commitment: senior management need to be aware of costs and benefits of implementing GFSI schemes
- Understand current food safety status and upcoming federal *Safe Food for Canadians* regulations
- Need for gap assessment template
- Lack of Food Safety Culture
- Lack of basic food safety knowledge, HACCP, traceability
- Lack of expertise, time and resources
- Need to have a better understanding of internal audit and audit process, audit expectations
- Need support in choosing service providers: Certification Body, consultant, trainer
- Need an unbiased source of information

Proposed Solutions:

- Develop toolkit/GFSI roadmap for food processors as starting point
- Deliver seminars and case studies to demonstrate costs and benefits of implementing GFSI schemes (return on investment)
- Organize events/meetings for stakeholders; include presentations GFSI certified food processors (SMEs), retailers and GFSI scheme owners (share their “GFSI journey”)
- Provide training to improve management commitment
- Provide basic training on food safety, HACCP, traceability
- Provide training on the GFSI food safety schemes
- Provide workshops on Food Safety Culture
- Provide training on internal audit and audit process
- Develop forms and templates for the GFSI food safety schemes (preferably sector specific)
- Deliver webinars comparing all GFSI food safety schemes (preferably sector specific)
Include costs of registration and certification.

- Develop Fact Sheets:
 - Guidelines and costs for GFSI certification (including overall budget for the entire process such as registration, implementation, certification)
 - How to prepare for a food safety audit
 - How to choose a food safety consultant
 - How to choose a food safety trainer
 - How to select a Certification Body
 - How to maintain your Food Safety Management System (FSMS)
 - How to apply project management skills when implementing food safety systems

- Suggested OMAFRA could be a source for unbiased and trustworthy information, and include on its website:
 - Link to GFSI webpage for overview of schemes available and comparison chart
 - Link to certification bodies website
 - Link to GFSI schemes providing list of certified facilities in Ontario
 - Link to GFSI certified auditors and trainers
 - Link to industry associations
 - Glossary of terms
 - Success stories
 - Publications

6 – Next Steps

OMAFRA will review and assess the recommendations when developing the 2016/2017 Operational Planning Activities for the Food Safety and Traceability Programs Branch.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 – MEETING INVITATION

GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE (GFSI) INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

April 1, 2016 from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Macdonald Block at 900 Bay Street, Toronto, ON (Rideau Room)

*The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA),
invites you to join a discussion about
GFSI recognised food safety schemes,
connecting food processors and experts
in food safety and traceability to:*

- Network with colleagues and share expertise in implementing, consulting and auditing GFSI schemes
- Discuss challenges faced by clients during the development of food safety and traceability systems and how to overcome them
- Identify opportunities to help food processors achieve GFSI certification to meet market requirements

To register, simply RSVP “Yes!” to this email by **Thursday, March 10th, 2016**.

Registration is free. Space is limited.

AGENDA

State of the Food Industry in Ontario:
OMAFRA

GFSI in Canada: Karil Kochenderfer
(GFSI North American Representative)

Advancing GFSI Certification in Ontario:
a group discussion on the needs and
challenges of food and beverage
manufacturers in the areas of:

- Identification of the scheme that is right for their business
- Self-assessment and action plan
- Training and implementation
- Preparing for audit
- Audit and certification

APPENDIX 2 – METING AGENDA

9:30am – 10:00am	Registration and Continental Breakfast
10:00am – 10:10am	Opening Remarks Kelly McAslan Director, Food Safety and Traceability Programs Branch (FSTPB) Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
10:10am – 10:20am	Introductions
10:20am – 10:30am	State of the Food Industry in Ontario Art Zantinge Business and Investment Analyst, Business Development Branch - OMAFRA
10:30am – 11:00am	GFSI in Canada Karil Kochenderfer - GFSI North American Representative
11:00am – 11:10am	Group discussions: Advancing GFSI Certification in Ontario Sarah Wilson Manager, Food Safety Programs, FSTPB - OMAFRA
11:10am – 11:20am	BREAK
11:20am – 11:50am	Group discussions: Session #1 Identify challenges during each step of the process below and provide solutions to overcome them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the GFSI food safety scheme that is right for their business • Gap analysis and Action Plan • Training
11:50am – 12:30pm	Group Presentations #1
12:30pm – 1:15pm	LUNCH
1:15pm – 1:50pm	Group discussions: Session #2 Identify challenges during each step of the process below and provide solutions to overcome them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation • Audit preparation • Audit and certification process • Post-audit
1:50pm – 2:00pm	BREAK
2:00pm – 2:40pm	Group Presentations #2
2:40pm – 3:00pm	Wrap-up
3:00pm	Closing remarks

APPENDIX 3 – GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDANCE

Discussion Topic: “Advancing GFSI Certification in Ontario”

SESSION #1

GFSI CERTIFICATION PROCESS: STEPS #1-3	
Group Discussions: 30 minutes	
STEP #1: Identification of the GFSI food safety scheme that is right for their business	Time: 10 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the challenges/barriers when deciding which GFSI scheme to adopt? ○ How do you become familiar with each GFSI scheme? ○ How do you determine the costs associated with implementing a GFSI scheme? ○ Other challenges/barriers? 	
STEP #2: Gap analysis and Action Plan	Time: 10 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the challenges when conducting a gap assessment? ○ What are the challenges when developing a work plan? ○ What are the barriers for identifying timelines, budget and resources e.g. building, equipment, personnel, technology? ○ What are the challenges associated with management commitment? ○ Other challenges/barriers? 	
STEP #3: Training	Time: 10 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the training needs? Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific GFSI schemes, food safety, traceability, others. ○ Lack of expertise of in-house knowledge ○ Training availability of staff ○ Training frequency, costs, time ○ Staff training on internal audit ○ Level of Food Safety and Traceability culture in the organization ○ Other challenges/barriers? 	
Group Presentations: 40 minutes	

SESSION #2

GFSI CERTIFICATION PROCESS: STEPS #4-7	
Group Discussions : 35 minutes	
STEP #4: Implementation	Time: 15 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the challenges/barriers in developing and implementing written programs? e.g. policies, procedures and records Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understanding standards ○ External help (consultant) or in-house expertise ○ GMPs, HACCP, Recall, Traceability ○ Food safety team/coordinator: availability of resources and knowledge/ expertise, costs, time ○ Verification and validation, risk assessment ○ Assessment of equipment, site internal/exterior standards of the building ○ Other challenges/barriers? 	
STEP #5: Audit preparation	Time: 8 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the challenges for preparing for the certification audit or pre-audit? Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal audit: identify gaps and corrective action plan ○ Selection of certification body ○ Understanding the audit process ○ Other challenges/barriers? 	
STEP #6: Certification audit	Time: 7 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the challenges during the certification audit? Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Previous audits reports and corrective action plan ○ Personnel availability and knowledge ○ Audit costs, duration and type of audit ○ Documentation review and on-site audit ○ Information to the auditor and certification body ○ Auditor qualification and role of accredited certification body ○ Other challenges/barriers? 	
STEP #7: Post-audit	Time: 5 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the challenges post-audit? Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On-going maintenance of the standard ○ Staff motivation ○ Continuous improvement process ○ Schedule of re-audit ○ Communication with certification body and GFSI scheme ○ Other challenges/barriers? 	
Group Presentations: 40 minutes	

APPENDIX 4 – DISCUSSION OUTCOMES

(information compiled from table flip-chart notes for all 4 groups)

STEP #1: Identification of the GFSI Food Safety Scheme that is right for their business

CHALLENGES	OMAFRA ROLE	INDUSTRY ROLE
<p>Buyer influence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal communication between buyer and sales • Retailers not educated on GFSI schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar to compare schemes, including costs of registration • Trade association to assist with choice of scheme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to get senior management buy-in at the very beginning: translate benefits in \$ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars, case studies with successful stories (cost of benefit analysis, return on investment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed information to OMAFRA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding scheme and where to get info: need research and comparison information and costs of registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMAFRA as unbiased and trustworthy source of information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview of schemes available: GFSI schemes comparison chart (link to GFSI Scheme) ○ Include overall budget for the entire process (i.e. registration, implementation, certification) ○ Publications ○ Link to GFSI schemes websites ○ One toolkit – roadmap (Gantt Chart format, including timelines and budget for GMPs and HACCP) • Webinar/training to compare schemes, including costs of registration • Sector specific webinars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed information to OMAFRA

STEP #2: Gap analysis and Action Plan

CHALLENGES	OMAFRA ROLE	INDUSTRY ROLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior management commitment: need to show benefits as well as costs to business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminars and case studies (GFSI journey) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> successful stories realistic costs (including capital and equipment) cost of benefit analysis return on investment impact of recalls management roles and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feed information to OMAFRA (how?) Provision Industry associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of competent resources (time and staff): need for internal/external assessment Current food safety status versus where to go (upcoming regulations <i>Safe Food for Canadians</i> regulations and market requirements) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardized gap assessment against each GFSI scheme and sector specific Do the schemes have their own gap assessments available on the website? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector specific gap assessment Food safety culture workshops Project management skills

STEP #3: Training

CHALLENGES	OMAFRA ROLE	INDUSTRY ROLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of basic food safety knowledge, HACCP, traceability How to get training to all staff (floor people), cross-training within organization <p>Lack of food safety culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinar of GFSI recognised food safety schemes Toolkit for train the trainer Basic food safety courses (at no or low cost). Generic HACCP plans for different sectors (link to CFIA website) Food safety culture workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry associations to provide basic course Scheme specific training Training specific for different sector, including pictures/flowcharts Educate on attending courses that are accredited/approved by schemes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of information available but all over the place (Example: options of software/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link all information available (e.g. repository) and direct clients as to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for GFSI to educated buyers/ customers on

equipment)	order of steps	benchmarking process and equivalency of schemes
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STEP #4: Implementation

CHALLENGES	OMAFRA ROLE	INDUSTRY ROLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of expertise, time and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide funds Training to develop in-house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic training Training on the scheme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realistic timelines for training and implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> need to have implementation plan schedule include realistic costs and staff involved Confusion regarding terminology and understanding the clauses Example: verification x validation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toolkit (e.g. Canada Gap): HACCP plan, templates, Food Safety plan Glossary of terms General guidelines and timelines for implementation Verification and validation: list of resources available Use available templates: Advantage HACCP Links to industry specific information Understand the intend of the clauses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on the scheme Generic validation examples by sector Industry associations to develop sector specific forms and templates (partner with government)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to choose external help (consultant, trainer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Factsheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to choose a food safety consultant Suggest OMAFRA to have a list of certified consultants, auditors and trainers 	

STEP #5: Audit preparation

CHALLENGES	OMAFRA ROLE	INDUSTRY ROLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you know when you are ready? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-assessment Adequate preparation of personnel before an audit : fear of audit by personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Audit tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit preparation guides Benefits to re-audit Provide link to schemes and Certification Bodies Communicate message (suggest gap or pre-audit) OMAFRA can help to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate message (suggest gap or pre-audit)

	connect people (have someone from other business to come and pre-audit another business: mentorship)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal audit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges conducting effective audit Lack of trained staff Need to outsource 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditor competency service (GFSI scheme website) costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified internal auditors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 day training is not enough Need to know audit standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a train the trainer program (see approach developed by CFIA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry associations to develop sector specific training (train the trainers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of certification body: need Certification bodies to be listed on each scheme site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Info sheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAQ for picking a Certification Body List of Certification Body What Certification Body rating means (combine Info sheets: consultant and auditor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education: steps to certification (Certification Body)

STEP #6: Certification audit

CHALLENGES	OMAFRA ROLE	INDUSTRY ROLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate preparation of personnel before an audit Staff onsite to support (especially senior management) Fear of audit and gaps (staff nerves) Managing expectations: opportunity to recognize as continuous improvement journey (revisit and revise) Complexity of FSMS takes too long to find documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop fact sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how to prepare for an audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff training/retraining Notification of audit and expectations regarding process Practice during internal audit Post-audit review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility not sure about audit process, audit expectations Recognize you have options with Certification Body Understand audit cycle for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Fact sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What to expect from an audit (Certification Body) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training: day of an audit Communications Audit agenda is helpful to organize

<p>scheme: announced or announced, communication with Certification Body</p>		<p>audit calibration of auditors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How auditor is assigned
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STEP #7: Post-audit

CHALLENGES	OMAFRA ROLE	INDUSTRY ROLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping momentum post-audit (follow-up): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-audit actions develop and prioritize corrective action plan, Internal audit/ continuous improvement plan Responding to non-conformities and root cause Lack of food safety culture Certification Body as a service provider (good communication) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop FAQ's: How to maintain a FSMS Internal audit training (Refresher training) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAQ's for maintaining FSMS Internal audit training (Refresher training)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key performance indicators: establish list of what to measure <p>e.g. link to manager's performance – establish culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include message in training and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role is in preparation Industry responsible for actions to get results and follow-up 	

Other comments from the participants:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested to provide a link to GFSI schemes at OMAFRA website (list of certified facilities in Ontario) Scheme owners always in need for qualified resources: certified consultants and auditors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested a discussion about GFSI food safety schemes to be undertaken with the buyer Suggested a large event in Guelph in 2 years (2018). Have GFSI certified SMEs, retailers and GFSI scheme owners sharing their GFSI journey.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other audits different than GFSI food safety schemes have been required by the customers/retailers