



IAF and GFSI MLA AGREEMENT

1. Introduction

1.1 The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) has sought and received recognition for the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and the benchmarking process for the food safety schemes by the IAF. Recognition of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and the benchmarking process will facilitate the endorsement of GFSI benchmarked food safety schemes that apply to have their GFSI benchmarked food safety schemes endorsed as a sub-scope of the IAF MLA in accordance with IAF PL3 and this agreement.

1.2 GFSI is a division of The Consumer Goods Forum. GFSI was launched in May 2000. The GFSI Board of Directors consists of major global retailers, food manufacturers and food service operators. Together this group provides the strategic direction for and oversees the daily management of GFSI.

1.3 The GFSI objectives are to, among other things; reduce food safety risks by delivering equivalence and convergence between effective food safety management systems. The equivalence is delivered by benchmarking food safety schemes to a set of requirements contained in the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements. The sixth and seventh editions of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements were submitted to IAF as part of their application for recognition.

1.4 GFSI and benchmarked food safety scheme owners intend to make effective use of IAF MLA accreditation body signatories and the value of the worldwide IAF MLA. GFSI and benchmarked food safety scheme owners intend to require certification bodies (CBs) operating in a GFSI benchmarked food safety scheme to be accredited by an accreditation body that is a signatory to the IAF MLA with a main scope of product certification or management systems and to have their scope extended to include one or more of the GFSI benchmarked food safety schemes as sub-scope(s) to the IAF MLA (IAF MLA signatories).

1.5 The **International Accreditation Forum (IAF)** is the world association of conformity assessment accreditation bodies in the fields of management systems, products, services, process, persons and other similar programs of conformity assessment.

1.6 IAF is responsible for the harmonization and continuous improvement of the accreditation practices of its members with the ultimate goal to ensure the technical competence and impartiality of accredited CBs and to support its IAF MLA.

1.7 The IAF MLA is established and maintained on the basis of the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 through regular peer evaluations and is the tool by which IAF contributes to the elimination of technical barriers to trade and to promoting the free circulation of accredited certificates issued by accredited CBs.

2. Administration and Cooperation

2.1 Both IAF and GFSI, by means of this formal Agreement, have decided to develop and maintain a close cooperation between the two organizations to ensure harmonization in the accreditation practices performed by IAF members in the GFSI benchmarked food safety schemes and to cooperate in the continuous improvement of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and the benchmarking process.

2.2 In their respective roles, the IAF and GFSI shall operate in an open, non-discriminatory and transparent manner, avoiding conflicts of interest or limitation on the acceptance of food safety management systems schemes other than relevant technical considerations.

2.3 Both IAF and GFSI shall appoint a liaison person of each organization to act as contact persons.

2.4 The GFSI benchmarking process will ensure that GFSI benchmarked food safety schemes will be open to all CBs that are accredited by IAF MLA signatories that have the main scope of Product certification (ISO/IEC 17065) or Management Systems certification (ISO/IEC 17021-1).

2.5 The GFSI benchmarking process will ensure that benchmarked food safety scheme owners will only work with IAF MLA signatories and will stop working with any accreditation body that is not, or no longer, a signatory to the IAF MLA.

2.6 When a food safety scheme benchmarked by GFSI applies for IAF endorsement, the specific procedure for expansion of the scope of the IAF MLA based on privately owned sector certification schemes as described in Clause 4.2 of IAF PL3 will apply. However, the compliance of the certification scheme with the specific requirements as described in Clauses 4.1 as well as the general criteria as described in Clause 2.1 and 2.2 which is defined in Clause 4.2.2 will only be randomly checked by IAF as the evaluation of the compliance has already been completed on the basis of the recognition of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and the benchmarking process.

3. Information Exchange

In order to achieve such goals both organizations have agreed upon the following:

3.1 GFSI shall inform the IAF of the following:

- (a) Any proposed changes to the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and/or the benchmarking process;
- (b) Any proposed changes to the GFSI policy that may have an impact on the relationship between IAF and GFSI or the benchmarking process;
- (c) Changes to the list of GFSI benchmarked food safety schemes;
- (d) Any problems GFSI may have regarding IAF MLA signatory accreditation bodies; and
- (e) Change of contact person.

3.2 IAF shall inform GFSI of the following:

- (a) Intended changes in policy, procedure or documentation that may have an impact on the IAF's recognition of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements or the benchmarking process in accordance with IAF PL3;

- (b) Intention to develop technical documents that may have an impact on the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and any GFSI benchmarked food safety schemes;
- (c) Any questions that arise that relate to the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements or the benchmarking process;
- (d) Any issues arising with the food safety scheme owners which question the benchmarked food safety scheme's compliance with the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements; and
- (e) Change of contact person.

4. Technical Co-operation

4.1 The IAF will be considered as a stakeholder and invited to participate in any changes to the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and/or the benchmarking process.

4.2 GFSI will be considered as a stakeholder and invited to participate in the development of specific IAF application documents that relate to food safety scheme owners and/or product certification.

5. Implementation

5.1 This agreement will come into effect on the date the agreement is signed by both parties.

5.2 IAF and GFSI shall each bear their own costs.

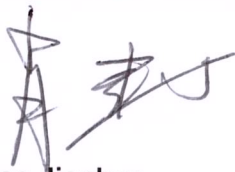
6. Confidentiality

6.1 IAF shall hold all information, not already in the public domain, in strictest confidence and shall only use it for the purpose for which it was provided and shall not disclose or make available such information to any third party without the prior written consent of GFSI.

7. Cancellation

7.1 This agreement between GFSI and IAF can be cancelled by either party in writing with a period of notice of three months.

International Accreditation Forum, Inc.

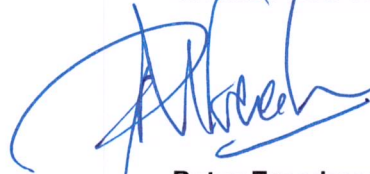


Xiao Jianhua
Chairman of IAF

05 April 2018

Date of Agreement:

Global Food Safety Initiative



Peter Freedman
Managing Director at The
Consumer Goods Forum (CGF)