COMPARING GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE (GFSI) RECOGNISED STANDARDS

A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE GFSI BENCHMARKED FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS

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ABSTRACT

This document aims to provide an overview of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) and what it means for an international food safety standard to be GFSI approved. It then goes on to discuss each of the GFSI approved schemes individually looking in detail at the key schemes which are offered by BRC, FSSC 22000, IFS Food, SQF Code, and Global G.A.P. For each of these, the requirements, benefits and certification processes are reviewed. There are five further schemes that are covered in brief. The most generic of the schemes and those most commonly adopted by branded goods manufacturers (FSSC 22000, BRC, SQF Code and IFS) are then compared, by discussing the criteria, similarities and differences between the schemes. It also includes a brief overview of alternative programmes that support small and medium sized businesses by providing a stepping-stone prior to full GFSI food safety certification. The paper then looks at the merits of a customised single food audit and elaborates on the benefits using a case study as an example. The case study highlights how food safety standards have an extensive crossover with environmental, health & safety and quality standards; and although there is rarely one ‘optimal fit’ food safety standard for any given organisation, a combination of schemes brought together in one audit procedure may be a suitable solution.

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