



GFSI BENCHMARKING REQUIREMENTS
VERSION 2020.1

PART IV GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Part IV - Glossary of Terms

Terms and definitions

For the purpose of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements, the following terms and definitions shall apply:

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE (WHEN APPLICABLE)
Accreditation	Third-party attestation related to a Conformity Assessment Body (body that performs conformity assessment activities and that can be the object of accreditation) conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. Note: in the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements, "Conformity Assessment Body" is referred to as "Certification Body".	ISO / IEC 17011
Accreditation Body	Authoritative body that performs accreditation.	ISO / IEC 17011
Agent	An organisation or individual that does not own but trades any type of food, feed and/ or packaging. Such activities exclude production, storage and any physical handling of the product; they can be performed under specific customer requirements or not.	
Allergen	A substance causing an adverse reaction that is mediated by an immunological response.	
Approved supplier	A supplier that has been evaluated to demonstrate conformance to specific requirements by the audited site. See also "Supplier" definition.	
Audit	Systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining objective evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled.	ISO/ IEC 19011 ISO/ IEC 9000
Audit duration	Time spent determining the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled, excluding the review of corrective action plans, and verification of corrective actions, when verification activities are not part of a routine audit. This may include onsite and remote auditing activities.	ISO/IEC 17021-1 (adapted)

Auditor	Qualified person who conducts an audit.	ISO/ IEC 19011 ISO/ IEC 9000
Broker	See “Agent”.	
Catering	Preparation and provision of food from any source, for consumption outside the home, within a defined premise.	
Central function	An identified central department (but not necessarily the headquarters of the organisation) which has the responsibility to plan, control and manage the organisation’s food safety management system. Note: this could also be an organisation which is employed by or is a subsidiary of a larger organisation.	
Certification	A process by which accredited Certification Bodies, based on an audit, provide written assurance that food safety requirements and management systems and their implementation conform to requirements.	
Certification body	A provider of certification services accredited to do so by an Accreditation Body.	
Certification Programme	A documented food safety Certification Programme, which has specified requirements (including standards and normative documents), specific rules and procedures. This shall contain all items required in the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements Document, which includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clearly defined scope • an audit protocol (to define conditions of certificate issuance, audit duration, non-conformity grading, etc.) • a list of auditing requirements • requirements for auditor and certification body personnel competences • an Integrity Program • referenced documents which are indispensable for the correct application of the certification programme. 	
Certification Programme Owner	An organisation, which is responsible for the development, management and maintenance of a Certification Programme.	

Competence	Ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results.	ISO/ IEC 19011 ISO/ IEC 9000
Competent laboratory	A laboratory that has the capability to produce precise, repeatable accurate test results using validated test methods and best practices (e.g. successful participation in proficiency testing programs, regulatory approved programs or accreditation to international standards).	
Complaint	Expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its product or service, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.	ISO / IEC 9000
Consultancy	<p>Participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> designing, implementing or maintaining a management system, for instance a) preparing or producing manuals or procedures, and b) giving specific advice, instructions or solutions towards the development and implementation of a management system; designing, manufacturing, installing, maintaining or distributing of a certified product or a product to be certified, or; designing, implementing, operating or maintaining of a certified process or a process to be certified, or; designing, implementing, providing or maintaining of a certified service or a service to be certified. <p>Note: Arranging training and participating as a trainer is not considered as consultancy, provided that, where the course relates to management systems or auditing, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely available in the public domain; i.e. the trainer does not provide company-specific solutions.</p>	ISO / IEC 17065 ISO / IEC 17021-1
Consumer	A person who is a member of the public, takes possession of food, is not functioning in the capacity of an operator of a food establishment or food processing plant, and does not offer the food for resale.	
Correction	Action to eliminate a detected nonconformity.	ISO / IEC 22000
Corrective action	Action to eliminate the cause of a nonconformity and to prevent recurrence.	ISO / IEC 9000

Customer	Person or organisation that could or does receive a product or a service that is intended for or required by this person or organisation.	ISO / IEC 9000
Disinfection	The reduction, by means of chemical agents and/or physical methods, of the number of microorganisms in the environment, to a level that does not compromise food safety or suitability.	CAC / RCP 1-1969
Emergency	Situation in which the company deviates from standard operating procedures under defined conditions.	
Environmental monitoring programme	Evaluation of the effectiveness of controls on preventing contamination from the site environment.	
Equipment	Machines and equipment (including their parts and components necessary to link them together, and their services and utensils necessary for their operation), feed and food transport systems to bring ingredients/packaging to them, together with food storage and display units to allow the processing and retail of food, feed and packaging materials in GFSI scopes of recognitions.	
Feed	Single or multiple products, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended to be fed to food-producing animals.	ISO / IEC 22000 CAC / GL 81-2013
Fixed site	An established building/facility based at a fixed location where a finished service is carried out for customers / clients (e.g., laundry).	
Food	Substance (ingredient), whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended for consumption, and includes drink, chewing gum and any substance which has been used in the manufacture, preparation or treatment of "food" but does not include cosmetics or tobacco or substances (ingredients) used only as drugs. Umbrella term for any product in the GFSI scope, i.e. packaging, feed, etc.	ISO / IEC 22000 CAC / GL 81-2013
Food fraud	A collective term encompassing the deliberate and intentional substitution, addition, tampering or misrepresentation of food, food ingredients, feed, food packaging or labelling, product information or false or misleading statements made about a product for economic gain that could impact consumer health.	

Food fraud vulnerability	Susceptibility or exposure to a food fraud risk, which is regarded as a gap or deficiency that could place consumer health at risk if not addressed.	
Food defence	The process to ensure the security of food, food ingredients, feed or food packaging from all forms of intentional malicious attack including ideologically motivated attack leading to contamination or unsafe product.	
Food safety	Assurance that any product within the GFSI scopes of recognition (e.g. food, packaging, feed, etc.) will not cause an adverse health effect for the consumer when it is prepared and/or consumed and/or used according to its intended use. Umbrella term to define any product which is subject to GFSI scope of recognition.	CAC / RCP 1-1969 ISO / IEC 22000
Food safety culture	Shared values, beliefs and norms that affect mindset and behaviour toward food safety in, across and throughout an organisation. Elements of food safety culture are those elements of the Food Safety Management System which the senior management of a company may use to drive the food safety culture within the company. These may include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication about food safety policies and responsibilities • Training • Employee feedback on food safety related issues • Performance measurement. 	
Food Safety Management System	Set of interrelated or interacting elements to establish policy and objectives and to achieve those objectives, used to direct and control an organisation with regard to food safety.	ISO / IEC 22000
GFSI Benchmark	A process by which a food safety Certification Programme is compared to the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements Document to determine equivalence. When a Certification Programme was previously recognised by the GFSI and is seeking renewed recognition, the term used is re-benchmark.	

GFSI Benchmark Leader	A person, appointed by GFSI, who is assigned to manage the benchmarking process for a specific Certification Programme application. The person shall have overall responsibility for the benchmarking activities for a specific Certification Programme application.	
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point. A system which identifies, evaluates, controls and monitors hazards relating to food safety and specified by Codex Alimentarius.	CAC / RCP 1-1969
HACCP-based system	A system, based on a generic hazard analysis for the industry sector, which identifies, evaluates, controls and monitors hazards relating to food safety, as specified by Codex Alimentarius.	
ICT	Information and communication technology. The use of technology for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analysing and transmitting information. It includes software and hardware such as smartphones, handheld devices, laptop computers, desktop computers, drones, video cameras, wearable technology, artificial intelligence, emails, and others.	IAFMD4
Incident management	A process of identifying and managing any event where, based on the information available, there are concerns about threats to the food safety of product that could require intervention to protect consumers interests, such as isolation and removal from the supply chain.	
Inspection	Examination of a product (3.2), process (3.3), service (3.4), or installation or their design and determination of its conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgment, with general requirements	ISO/IEC 17020:2012
Mobile site	A mobile facility where a finished service is carried out for customers (e.g., mobile canning operation).	
Monitoring	Determining the status of a system, a process or an activity.	ISO / IEC 22000

Multi-site organisation	An organisation covered by a single management system comprising an identified central function (not necessarily the headquarters of the organisation) at which certain processes/activities are planned and controlled, and a number of sites (permanent, temporary or virtual) at which such processes/activities are fully or partially carried out.	IAF MD1
Non-conformity	Non-fulfilment of a requirement.	ISO/ IEC 19011 ISO/ IEC 9000
Normative documents	Documents stating the specified requirements (need or expectation that is stated) such as regulations, standards, and technical specifications. Note: normative documents are part of the Certification Programme.	ISO / IEC 17000
On site	On-site audit activities are performed at the location of the audited organisation.	
Organisation	Person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives.	ISO / IEC 22000
Outsourcing	A firm, company or individual carrying out a process or activities on behalf of the site audited.	
Perishable food	Food likely to spoil, decay or become unsafe to consume if not kept refrigerated or frozen. Examples of foods that must be kept refrigerated for safety include e.g. meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, and all cooked leftovers.	
Primary production	Those steps in the food chain up to and including, for example, harvesting, slaughter, milking, fishing, production of agricultural plant/tree crops and agricultural animal livestock. The resulting food products are similar to their natural state, but may have been packed, washed, trimmed (not cut into pieces), or otherwise undergone any process not defined under the definition of 'processed food'.	
Procedure	Specified way to carry out an activity or a process.	ISO / IEC 9000
Process	Set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs to outputs.	ISO / IEC 22000

Product	Output that is a result of a process.	ISO / IEC 22000
Product recall	The removal by a supplier of product from the supply chain that has been deemed to be unsafe and has been sold to the end consumer, or is with retailers or caterers and is available for sale.	
Product withdrawal	The removal of product by a supplier from the supply chain that has been deemed to be unsafe, which has not been placed on the market for purchase by the end consumer.	
Purchasing	Acquiring raw materials, ingredients, inputs or other product needed to produce the site's end product(s), or buying a service such as pest control, laundry, etc.	
Raw material	A component of a food, feed or packaging that has not undergone processing.	
Remote	From a location other than the physical location of the audited organisation.	
Scope of recognition	A specific sector of the food or feed industry, or the provision of related food safety services, defined by GFSI, for which a Certification Programme is seeking recognition.	
Service	Service means of delivering value for the customer by facilitating outcomes the customer wants to achieve.	ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018
Service Fraud	Any suspected intentional action by a service provider for the purpose of deceiving the service purchaser and gaining undue direct or indirect economic advantage. This can include deception regarding the service and/or materials and consumables used in the provision of the service.	
Service Level Agreement	Commitment between a service provider and a customer. Particular aspects of the service – such as quality, availability, responsibilities – shall be agreed between the service provider and the service user.	

Service provider	Organization that manages and delivers a service or services to customers.	ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018
Site	Location where an organisation performs work or from which a service is provided. Facility subject to the audit scope.	
Specification	Document stating requirements.	ISO / IEC 9000
Standard	Document established by consensus and approved by a recognised body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context.	ISO / IEC Guide 2
Supplier	An entity from whom the audited site purchases raw materials, ingredients, products, and/or services.	
Transport container	Vessel in which the product or raw materials is being placed or held during storage and distribution.	
Validation	Obtaining evidence that a control measure (or combination of control measures) will be capable of effectively controlling the significant food safety hazard.	ISO / IEC 22000
Vehicle	Any device used for the conveyance of raw material, ingredients, food, feed or packaging that is capable of being moved upon roadways, railways, waterways or airways. Vehicles can be motorised or non-motorised.	
Verification	Confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled.	ISO / IEC 22000