

GFSI has worked for 20 years to harmonise food safety certification programmes, through its Benchmarking Requirements and recognition process. GFSI's "once certified, recognised everywhere" embodies this objective that organisations should only need certification against one of the GFSI-recognised certification programmes to demonstrate their food safety capability.

GFSI therefore provides a framework for harmonising food safety Certification Programmes, while leaving market demand to drive the creation of such programmes. We selected this model for a number of important reasons, such as allowing for tailored programmes based on industry sector, customers and regional needs.

GFSI focuses on the harmonisation of certification programmes' food safety outcomes, it ensures trust in all GFSI-recognised Certification Programmes and their acceptance by GFSI steering committee members, CoA signatories and more broadly any users of GFSI recognition. GFSI therefore does not support the approach of "one standard for the food industry", but rather one of an open market for food safety standards.

Under this approach, GFSI fosters relationships with internationally recognised standard organisations, such as ISO. GFSI's continuous relationship with ISO is formalised through a A-liaison status to ISO CASCO and ISO TC 34 SC17, two key ISO groups when it comes to policies and standards for conformity assessment and standards used in food safety certification, respectively. In addition, our GFSI Benchmarking Requirements makes relevant references to ISO standards.

GFSI's position vis-à-vis ISO is that ISO and GFSI have different but complementary roles:

- ▶ GFSI is a benchmarking organisation assessing food safety certification programmes, we do not write standards;
- ▶ ISO is an internationally recognised standard development organisation providing robust and voluntary standards.

It is worth noting that GFSI always refers to ISO international standards, which are developed following a rigorous process based on consensus of experts. Although GFSI recognises the value of Publicly Available Specifications (PAS) for the industry as a transitional tool to international standards, GFSI does neither refer to nor fund the development of such PAS, a less stringent but faster ISO process typically funded by the organisation(s) requiring them.