

GHI Matters

The newsletter of the Global Harmonization Initiative




Message from the President

On the 27 June 2012, during the IFT Annual Meeting, a well-attended GHI meeting took place under the chairmanship of Larry Keener. One of the topics discussed was the publication of the second book on global harmonization of food regulations. Dr Prakash had prepared an outline that was much appreciated and elicited other ideas from those present. A detailed albeit preliminary plan will be created and published in the next issue of the newsletter, when readers will be invited to comment and suggest additional topics for inclusion. Other meetings in which GHI was involved took place in Shanghai (CN, Food ingredients and Food Safety) and in Baltimore (USA, Global Food Contact Conference); you will find short reports on these meetings in this issue.

It is pleasing to see the number of GHI Ambassadors increasing rapidly. In the past two months their number increased from 12 (May 2012) to 24, and more are being appointed. The Ambassadors make it possible for issues to be discussed in local languages and reports on the discussions translated. The Ambassadors also facilitate identification of local experts. A list of GHI Ambassadors is provided on page 9.

Also I am delighted to announce that Dr Susanne Braun, Managing Director of the Life Science Center, University of Hohenheim (Stuttgart, DE) has adopted the role of Working Group Coordinator. Shirley Jankowski has occupied this role for several years, but felt it was time to play another role in GHI, and the Board is grateful to Shirley for staying on until a replacement was found.

The coming months will be busy for many GHI Officers with meetings and workshops during the 16th IU-FoST World Congress of Food Science and Technology (Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil), an industrial event in Kiev (Ukraine), the 5th International Meeting on Safety, 

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Achieving consensus on the science of food regulations and legislation to ensure the global availability of safe and wholesome food products for all consumers.

► Quality and Functionality in Food Industry and Food Services (Mazatlán, Mexico – organized by SOMEICCA), and GHI-sponsors' EFFoST and EHEDG meetings in Montpellier (FR) and Valencia (ES), respectively. Details of these meetings can be found in the agenda. It would be great if you could make it to one or more of these meetings...

In many countries the holiday season has started, and I wish all readers an enjoyable time, wherever you will be on the globe!

With kind regards,

Huub Lelieveld

Food Safety Initiative for Nutraceuticals, Nutritionals and Functional Foods in India

India is one of the first countries to formulate regulations, under their Food Safety and Standards Authority, to control nutraceuticals, nutritionals, functional, and dietetic foods. It is expected the regulations will focus not only on food safety but also a holistic approach to the harmonisation of rules guarding the safety of many food ingredients including traditional herbs and other plant-based compounds, which are used in traditional and ethnic foods. These components are becoming more and more popular in health and wellness foods and beverages sold globally. India's lead in this area is to be applauded, and it is understood that Dr Prakash (CSIR – India) is chairing the committee tasked with developing these regulations.

5th International Symposium on Food Packaging: Scientific developments supporting safety and innovation.

14-16th November 2012, Berlin (DE)

Bringing together scientists and professionals from academia, industry and the public sector, the International Symposia on Food Packaging, held every four years, are internationally recognised as a forum to discuss the safety and quality of food packaging and promote a balanced approach to solving health and environmental problems of common global concern.



GHI meetings and workshops are where the consensus happens!

GHI has legal non-profit entity status and its charter and constitution are registered in Vienna, Austria as the GHI-Association (ZVR453446383).

This year, the participants will review advances in the research and technology underpinning the safety and quality of food packaging and examine the implications of developing harmonized standards and regulations, based on established science, for controlling foodstuffs packaging.

This multi-disciplinary meeting will be of interest to those active in the areas associated with the safety and quality of food packaging along the whole food-chain. It will bring together those involved in basic research, innovate applications in the market place, and those responsible for ensuring the safety and quality of food contact materials. Topics will include risk assessment, sustainability and novel packaging, as well as analytical challenges and packaging quality assurance.

The symposium is organized by the ILSI Europe (Brussels, BE).

*Prof. Alejandro Ariosti,
GHI Ambassador in Argentina*

GLOBAL FOOD CONTACT CONFERENCE USA 2012

By Alejandro Ariosti

The Global Food Contact Conference 2012 (GFC, 15-17th May 2012) was held in Baltimore, Maryland (USA) and was attended by representatives from government agencies, academia and the food industry.

This international meeting organized both in European and America annually, by Smithers Pira (UK, www.smitherspira.com), focuses on global regulations for food contact materials (FCMs).

This year's agenda included a detailed update on regulations in the USA and Europe, Canada, Latin America, Japan and South East Asia as well as BRIC countries (Brazil, China, India and Russia), and the different approaches to FCMs components risk assessment.

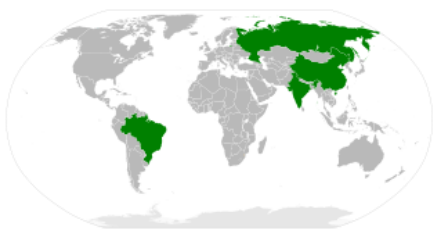
There is a 'Custom Union' between Russia, and Belarus and Kazakhstan meaning these countries have common FCMs regulations (Uniform sanitary and epidemiological and hygienic requirements for goods subject to sanitary and epidemiological supervision (control), Chapter II, Section 16); a recent translation in English can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/food/international/trade/sps_requirements_en.htm

Issues of non-globally regulated substances were also discussed at the GFC. Regulated at the national level, there is a clear need for harmonization, particularly with respect to bisphenol A (US and Canada, China, EU, MERCOSUR [Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay]), printing inks (Germany, Switzerland), polymeric coatings (Belgium, The Netherlands), non-harmonized polymeric materials and nanomaterials (EU). The presentation by Barry Novak (General Mills, US), 'What do global food companies desire in packaging materials selection?' was interesting for the audience generally as well as FCMs manufacturers more specifically, and explored how FCMs are treated differently across jurisdictions.

In my presentation, 'The advancement of the MERCOSUR FCMs regulations and a panorama of the situation in Latin America', I considered the regulatory situation across the region, and presented GHI, its objectives and the book 'Ensuring Global Food Safety – Exploring Global Harmonization'.

More specifically, the presentation focused on 'Food Packaging Legislation: Sanitary Aspects' (Kopper & Ariosti), which deals with FCMs regulations in several jurisdictions and presents a comparative table that explains how some countries and regions regulate different specific issues.

Alejandro Ariosti is with Materials for Sanitary Applications - Technical Assistance, National Institute Of Industrial Technology (INTI) - Plastics Centre (Argentina) and GHI Ambassador for Argentina. He is also Professor at the Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry - University of Buenos Aires (AR).



Agenda Meetings with GHI involvement

August 5-9 The IUFoST 16th World Congress of Food Science and Technology, Foz do Iguacu, Brazil (<http://iufost.org.br/>). A committee chaired by the GHI representative of the Food Chemistry Division of EuCheMS, Prof. Hans Steinhart, has put together a symposium on „**International Perspectives of Food Safety and Regulation: A need for Harmonized Regulations**“. The symposium takes place on 7 August, 14:30 to 18:00 in Expocenter B.

There will be several other GHI meetings during the congress, to take place in the afternoon of **8 August**, between 14:00 and 18:00 in room Parana IV.

There will be a **GHI General Assembly** on 8 August from 10:00 to 12:00 in room Parana II.



September 11-14 Inprod mash, Kiev, Ukraine. This is a trade show of equipment and technologies for food processing (<http://inprod mash.ua/>). The GHI President has been invited to give a presentation, explaining the purpose and activities of GHI and the benefits of harmonization of food regulations for food processing equipment.



October 22-26 SOMEICCA's National meeting in Mazatlán, Mexico. SOMEICCA stands for Sociedad Mexicana de Inocuidad y Calidad para Consumidores de Alimentos (Mexican Society for Consumer Food Safety and Food Quality). Marco Antonio León Félix, the GHI Ambassador in Mexico, is involved in this organisation. Apart from a local GHI meeting (in Spanish), SOMEICCA would happily host GHI Working Group meetings. On Wednesday, 31 October from 12:10 till 13:05 Huub Lelieveld will give a presentation "**Global harmonization of food safety regulations – what is the progress?**". EHEDG, an institutional sponsor of GHI will also have meetings during the congress.

November 5-9 The 7th Conference of the World Mycotoxin Forum and XIIIth IUPAC International Symposium on Mycotoxins and Phycotoxins in Rotterdam, The Netherlands (<http://www.wmfmeetsiupac.org/html/welcome.asp>). Dr. Naresh Magan has been invited to chair a session during this conference and is investigating if there will be an opportunity to discuss the WG Mycotoxins during that session or whether there is a possibility for a poster.



November 7-8 EHEDG World Congress on Hygienic Engineering & Design – Spain, in Valencia, see for details www.ehedg-congress.org. EHEDG (www.ehedg.org) is one of the sponsors of GHI. The **GHI Working Group Food Contact Materials**, chaired by Eric Partington, will hold a meeting during this event on Thursday, 8 November, starting at 17:00. Anyone wanting to participate in that meeting is invited to send an email to Eric Partington (eric@effex.co.uk).



November 14-16 5th International Symposium on FOOD PACKAGING - Scientific Developments supporting Safety and Innovation – Berlin, Germany. For details, see page 2.



November 20-23 EFFoST Annual Conference in Montpellier, France (www.effostconference.com/index.html). Aleksandra Martinovic will present a paper on "Global harmonization of food safety regulations, what is the progress?" Dr. Firouz Darroudi will give a low-cost-high-quality genotoxicity testing course in association with the conference, with a theoretical part on Monday, 19 and a practical part from 23-24 November. Registration is via de conference website.

The **Working Group Food safety in relation to religious dietary laws** will have its 2nd meeting during the Conference. If you are a scientist involved in food safety in relation to religious dietary laws, you are welcome to attend this meeting, to discuss the relationship between food safety and religious dietary laws and your experience in this field. The working group acts as a platform where scientists can exchange knowledge and experience in this area and develop advice that can be used to give more structure to religious dietary laws in relation to food safety. By presenting scientific research worldwide, this subject will become more accessible to the food industry and ensure safe, nutritious food for all consumers including religious communities.

If you would like to attend, please send an email to: religiousdietarylaws@globalharmonization.net with subject: 2nd GHI WG FS RDL

If you would like to contribute a presentation, please send an email to: religiousdietarylaws@globalharmonization.net with subject: 2nd GHI WG FS RDL presentation



Food safety extended to the distribution chain

Kenneth S. Marsh

GHI aims to harmonize food regulations that promote safe food, and eliminate regulations that deprive people of food for reasons other than safety.

Food hazards are defined in terms of potential to cause disease or death. Typically, food safety is based on eliminating contamination by microorganisms or other agents. Diseases resulting from nutritional inadequacy or food insecurity are not generally considered as (food) hazards. However, it is reasonable to extend the definition of food safety to include adequacy.

A significant development in promoting food safety was process control with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) being the most well known. HACCP has been mandatory in the EU for many years, and required in the US as part of the US Food Safety Modernization Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in January 2011.

Any processing is ineffective unless appropriate packaging protection is employed, and packaging in direct contact with food products is critical to the success of food processing. Transportation packaging protects food against crushing, bruising and often attack from rodents, insects and even seawater. Packaging allows food to be transported to remote areas, extends shelf life and helps retain nutrients. Thus, it is an important component in the food safety and adequacy. Perhaps, the hazards list should be extended to include post-production actions:

- Chemical contamination - most feared by consumers
- Physical damage – most noticed by consumers
- Microbiological hazards - most dangerous and already the major emphasis

... and actions that reduce the food supply:

- Biological attack (e.g. birds, rodents, insects)
- Biological action of product (e.g. senescence and sprouting)

Post Harvest Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (PHHACCP) was first proposed in 2005, as an effective and rational means of assuring food protection and delivery from harvest through consumption. The 'hazard' definition should include anything that renders food unusable for human consumption and, therefore, unable to sustain life.

Post harvest food loss is estimated by the United Nations FAO to be 33% or 1.3 billion tons per year. If the goal of GHI is to harmonize food regulations that promote a safe and adequate food supply, and reduce destruction of food for reasons other than safety, perhaps consideration of Post Harvest (or post-production) HACCP should be included in these activities.

This article is an adaptation of K. S. Marsh (2011) Packaging for Enhanced Food Security published in Food Safety Magazine (February/March 2012), which can be viewed at <http://www.foodsafetymagazine.com/article.asp?id=4462&sub=sub1>

Kenneth S. Marsh, Ph.D., CPP is a consultant on food, packaging and international trade through Kenneth S. Marsh & Associates, Ltd., and Director of the Global Food Security Program of the Woodstock Institute for Science in Service to Humanity (WIS²H or WISSH). In GHI, he is forming a Working Group on Preventing Post-Harvest Losses. He has over 40 years of industrial experience and held the first endowed professorship in packaging science in the US.

Invisible Things

by Sara Andersson and illustrated by

Susan Litsios

Originally from Iran but living in Switzerland, Yasmine Motarjemi graduated in food engineering from the University of Lund in Sweden. Her book, “Les Invisibles”, written in French and published under her own name, is a story about a little girl with food poisoning who tries cleverly, and successfully, to find out the cause. In the process, she learns much and so will the reader.

The occurrence of foodborne illnesses is high everywhere in the world, despite attempts by governments and NGOs to reduce the occurrence through education. By far the most incidents result from people ‘handling’ food in an inappropriate way. Many, albeit with the best intentions, make fundamental mistakes during food preparation and are unaware of the consequences of their ignorance. What is so attractive about this book is it is pleasant to read and, although written for children, it is good reading for adults who may be reminded about facts they have forgotten or learn things they never knew.

Based on 40 years of experience in the field, the book is highly recommended for food safety inspectors, school teachers and medical staff but also food safety regulators and politicians because they need to understand that (globally harmonized) food safety regulations must be based on science and not assumptions.

Dr Yasmine Motarjemi is an expert in food safety and food safety management. Among other positions, she has been Corporate Food Safety Manager for Nestlé and was senior scientist in food safety at the World Health Organization (WHO). Dr Motarjemi has edited several books on food safety and related topics.

Invisible Things is beautifully illustrated by Susan Litsios, a famous illustrator of children books.

The original, French version (ISBN-10: 2970051257; ISBN-13: 978-2970051251) is published by Elstir Editions. It is also available in English published by CreateSpace (May 2012, ISBN-10: 1469985713; ISBN-13: 9781469985718) and available from Amazon (.co.uk or .com) and Kindle (ASIN: B008NO421S). It is likely the book will be translated into other languages in the future.

Food ingredients and Food Safety: GHI participates

An Fi and IUFOST Seminar on 26-28th June 2012, Shanghai (CN)

Food Ingredients (Fi) Asia-Chain, Health ingredients (Hi) and Natural ingredients (Ni) China focused on the consumer market, health ingredients and, of course, food safety. IUFOST and Fi hosted three sessions on consumer protection and marketing, regulatory requirements and integration of food safety with product innovation.

Prof. Campbell-Platt chaired the two sessions with presentations from General Mills, China YUM Brands (China Division), Unilever and JDB Group, amongst others. Topics included building preventive food safety systems as well as food safety management in the supply chain and food safety by design rather by testing alone and regulatory requirements.

In the third session, Prof. Pingfan Rao described ‘China’s food products capabilities’, Dr Prakash (GHI Board Member), ‘Food factors and integrated quality and safety’, and Dr Rickey Yada (Guelph University, CA), ‘Food safety and nutritional challenges of aging population’. The IUFOST sessions finished with a case study presented by Drs Pingfan and Prakash on successful innovation and marketability in China and India describing how, in some cases, with meticulous planning, training and better understanding of regulations, products can be successful in the market. The sessions attracted both industry and academia, and were all well attended despite not being supported by a large expo from the Region.

V. Prakash

Food safety and trust

Isabella van Rijn

As the market for halal food is still growing, the need for regulation and exchange of information about halal food is also increasing. Consensus between different religious schools is not the main problem. What is, and what is not, allowed is largely agreed. However, due to the lack of regulation in some countries, only private certification bodies may control foods consumed by some religious communities.

Food safety includes the trustworthiness of the source. Trust between different actors in the food chain is a significant factor in trade, and the judgment of the consumer. Therefore, it could be said, safe halal food includes foods free from pork or pork products. These days, halal food is produced at a large scale and in large quantities. Globally, we have established the requirements for safe halal food in Codex Alimentarius, but there still are different requirement in different countries.

There is also a trend that non-Muslim consumers are buying halal food because they believe it is safer. This trend is also found in the United States where non-Jewish prefer to consume kosher food. The question remains, if these products are truly safer and, if so, what does this mean?

In the working group 'Food Safety in Relation to Religious Dietary Laws', the focus is not only on halal food but also on food for Hindus and, of course, kosher products.

Isabella van Rijn, MSc Public Health Nutrition, is the Chair of the GHI Working Group "Food safety in relation to religious dietary laws"

Food safety and Religious Dietary Laws: the Nigerian situation

Ismail Ayoade Odetokun

Nigeria, which has diverse ethnic and socio-cultural groups, has two major religions, Christianity and Islam, which together make up about 40% and 50%, respectively, of the population. Thus, Muslims form a large consumer base for halal food products across the region. Religious circles in Nigeria are always wary about the source of the food especially meat. For some years, the influx of foreign halal-branded products has increased because of the increasing (relative) wealth of the population.

There are many national laws relating to food safety in Nigeria. Unfortunately, these regulations do not take into consideration the religious dietary requirements of the consumers. There is no legislation for halal meat or bodies authorized to certify the fitness of foods (imported or locally produced). Thus, consciously or unconsciously, religious groups have devised a variety of means for processing foods to suit their religious demands. Though veterinary officers and animal health workers carry out meat inspection in abattoirs, local 'mallams' are frequently seen slaughtering cattle, sheep and goats enabling the general public to readily purchase these animals slaughtered outside existing regulations. The Nigeria government does not regulate ritual slaughter, and production and processing of meat and dairy products. Nigeria welcomes the development of international standards in respect of religious dietary laws since this would be useful for effective risk analysis of food safety and security, information management and promotion of globally harmonized religious foods and dietary standards. This would also facilitate the review, harmonization and effective enforcement of the existing laws relating to food safety.

Ismail Ayoade Odetokun is Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Master of Veterinary Public Health (University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria). He is the Secretary of the Working Group "Food safety in relation to religious dietary laws"

The focus on food safety at DFSC Dubai 2012

Speakers from around the world gathered at Dubai DFSC to discuss food safety and its impact on food security. Many talked about regulations and harmonization with reference to not only generic points but also the infrastructure gaps in many countries to deliver the same. Other sessions included food processing and the nature of contaminants, food analysis and the many problems associated with interference from the food matrix and other substances as well as the speed tests, and how food is handled from farm to the consumer. An Expo presented manufacture of processing equipment focusing on hygiene, and ingredients especially spices. Held in the Dubai Convention Centre, the meeting and exhibition were well attended and with pavilions hosted by different countries there was a strong international flavour in terms of trade and science. This is an annual meeting where GHI can affect global food safety.

V. Prakash

Meeting data template

We are keen to announce relevant meetings in the GHI Newsletter and on the GHI website. To be able to do so in a useful way, appropriate information is needed. To make it easy, the following template may be copied and pasted in an email to Dr. Aleksandra Martinovic (aleksandram74@gmail.com), GHI Meetings Coordinator and GHI Ambassador for Montenegro.

Full name of the event:

Details of location:

Name venue:

Street and number:

Town:

Province or state:

Country:

Web page:

Start and time:

End date and time:

Website of the event

Titles of GHI activity*:

Start date and time of GHI activity

End date and time of GHI activity

GHI officers or members involved:

Names:

Email addresses:

Phone numbers:

*e.g. presentations, posters, working group meeting

GHI is an initiative of the European Federation of Food Science and Technology (**EFFoST**), which is the European part of the International Union of Food Science and Technology (**IUFoST**) and the International Division of the Institute of Food Technologists (**IFT**). GHI is supported by many other scientific organisations and receives financial support from the European Hygienic Engineering and Design Group (**EHEDG**).



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Become a GHI Member

If you are interested in becoming a member of GHI, we invite you to take these simple steps:

- 1. Please visit www.globalharmonization.net and complete the Individual Membership Enrollment form. You will be asked to provide full contact information, current professional affiliations and areas of scientific expertise. There is no fee to join GHI.*
- 2. Once your application has been accepted, you will receive notification via email, along with information from GHI regarding upcoming meetings, working groups workshops, and more.*
- 3. For further questions on GHI membership, please send your inquiry to the attention of the Honorary Membership Director via email at membershipdirector@globalharmonization.net.*



Gain an influential voice in consensus with other experts that will have a real impact on reducing world hunger, improving food safety and nutrition, and supporting new technology applications.



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