

## ENSURING GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY. EXPLORING GLOBAL HARMONIZATION

Christine Boisrobert, Aleksandra Stjepanovic, Sangsuk Oh and Huub Lelieveld (Eds)

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The Global Harmonization Initiative (GHI) is a voluntary movement of food professionals, which since 2004 has been leading efforts to build global consensus on the scientific evidence underpinning food safety policymaking. GHI has produced this weighty book to explain to a wider readership what it is achieving and the importance of its work. The book will appeal to a very wide readership, including teachers and students of food technology, legislators and regulatory bodies and food professionals at all levels, in all countries. It is both readable for its own interest and logic, and an appropriate reference book for existing food law and the specific areas where harmonisation work is ongoing.

Important aims of the GHI which are enshrined in the book include

harmonising laws to eliminate trade barriers that masquerade as food safety protection, preventing the need for destruction of food shipments that complied with the country of production but not the country of arrival, reducing the risk of foodborne disease and adulteration as a result of increasing complexity of distribution. These themes are developed in Chapter 3, which also shows how the GHI has developed its structure through working groups and ambassadors.

The opening chapter explains the need for GHI and is followed by a comprehensive and compelling account of the history and current state of international food law. Chapter 4 is a guide to food safety objectives.

Chapters 5-24 each tackle a specific aspect of microbiology, toxicology or nutrition, where GHI is making strides towards attaining world-wide consensus. Important topics such as acrylamides, Listeria, mycotoxins, and RDAs (for example) each have their own chapter. In each case, the existing differences in regulations

and their consequences are shown, together with potential routes to harmonise protocols. Throughout, sound science is shown to be the route to work through the risk-benefit approach to make sensible and far-reaching decisions that will lead to harmonisation.

Navigation of the book is easy, with comprehensive chapter outlines, useful page headers, excellent references, comprehensive glossary of acronyms and abbreviations, and a thorough index. Although the chapter format varies slightly according to the needs of the material, each is self-contained, with an initial scene-setting paragraph which refers back to the main thrust. Some repetition is inevitable, but it is nowhere excessive. Many nationalities are represented in the 30 plus authorship, alas none of them from the UK. The editors, none with English as a first language, have delivered a superbly readable book with consistent style throughout.

*Catherine Side FIFST, Inside Consulting, Pangbourne.*