

GHI to Promote Science-based Food Safety Regulation at IUFOST Congress

The Global Harmonization Initiative will offer a full slate of consensus-building workshops in Cape Town designed to foster scientific agreement on global food laws

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The Global Harmonization Initiative (GHI), a network of scientific organisations and individual scientists working together to promote harmonisation of global food safety regulations and legislation, will introduce several new consensus-building resources and opportunities to attendees of the International Union of Food Science & Technology (IUFOST) 15th World Congress of Food Science & Technology in Cape Town, South Africa, 22-26 August, 2010 (www.iufost2010.org.za). With the publication of its first book, the release of its first scientific consensus document pending, and the formation of new working groups and an ambassador programme, the GHI is making big strides in bringing together scientists to endorse a science-based global regulatory framework that will enhance the safety, availability and quality of the food supply worldwide.

Founded in 2004 as a joint activity of the US-based Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) International Division and the European Federation of Food Science & Technology (EFFoST), the GHI is officially registered as a non-profit association, headquartered in Vienna, Austria. The group is supported by nearly two dozen international scientific organisations, academic research institutes and publishers, including IUFOST, the India Central Food Technological Research Institute, the International Association for Cereal Science & Technology, and the Korean Food Safety Institute.

GHI furthers the opportunity for collaborative work among members and provides educational outreach to key stakeholders by organising member meetings, workshops and symposia throughout the world. GHI's activities at the Cape Town conference

are supported by IUFOST, EFFoST and the South African Association for Food Science & Technology (SAAFoST), and include a full session, 'Harmonising Food Regulations,' on 24 August. The session features a detailed update on the initiative's progress, membership and activities given by GHI officer Dr. Vishweshwaraiah Prakash, who will discuss how the elimination of regulatory differences will make it more attractive for the private sector to invest in food safety systems and technology and help prevent the proliferation of non-science based trade barriers that do not have a clear and evident benefit to protecting public health. The session will also provide in-depth presentations from GHI officers and experts on global harmonisation challenges and efforts in the areas of mycotoxins, nanotechnology and food security.

Of the four standing GHI Working Groups (WGs) – *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready to Eat (RTE) Meals; High-Pressure Sterilisation; Chemical Food Safety & Toxicity; and Nanotechnology – the latter two will conduct workshops at the IUFOST World Congress. GHI's working group meeting format serves as the primary mechanism for consensus-building among scientists on global harmonisation of food safety regulations. The GHI Workshop on Mycotoxins, led by Prof. Wentzel Gelderblom (South Africa) will take place on 24 August, and the GHI Workshop on Nanotechnology, led by Prof. Frans Kampers (The Netherlands), will be held on 25 August.

GHI also will host two special working group knowledge-building courses in Cape Town. On 27 August, the GHI Conventional and Rapid Methods Testing for *Listeria monocytogenes* in Food Course, led by Dr. Beth-Ann Crozier-Dodson (US), will provide



In 2009 alone, GHI held working group meetings in the USA, The Netherlands, India, China, Czech Republic, Hungary and Mexico. In 2010, global harmonisation workshops are planned for locations in Turkey, South Africa and the USA, among others

attendees with a hands-on practical lab emphasising the benefits of harmonised methods. The two-day no-fee Toxicity Testing Course, led by Dr. Firrouz Daroudi (The Netherlands), will be held 27-28 August. This course provides information that supports consensus discussions in the Chemical Food Safety & Toxicity Working Group.

GHI's first book, *Ensuring Global Food Safety: Exploring Global Harmonization*, published in November 2009 by Elsevier/Academic Press, will be on display at the GHI Booth (G2). A number of other materials will be available at the stand, including information about the newly launched GHI Ambassador Program, which is designed to empower individual members to inform and invite scientists in their nations or regions to participate in the organisation's consensus-building activities.

For more information on GHI's activities, online no-fee member enrollment, and calendar of events, please visit

www.globalharmonization.net