



June 2021

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President's message

Recently, I received the very sad news that my good friend and active GHI member Wentzel Gelderblom ("Blom") passed away unexpectedly at far too young an age.

It is a pleasure to be able to address you again with this issue of GHI Matters, which has been incorporated in AJFAND, knowing that we reach many more readers than ever before.

The 23rd of this month was "[World Whistleblowers Day](#)" and it feels good that on that day the GHI webpage for anonymous reporting of serious food safety incidents had become publicly accessible, be it only in English initially but translations in other languages will follow as soon as possible.

GHI is about using good science to underpin food safety regulations with the aim to improve food security. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine of the US write about: "How does science know what it knows? What if scientific studies disagree? Can I use science to make decisions?" I strongly recommend visiting the [website](#) to learn more about these issues.

There is much more that we hope you will find of interest to you. Enjoy!

Huub Lelieveld, GHI President, June 2021

Editor's message

Dear Readers,

This current issue carries invaluable developments and reports from many GHI Working Groups (WG) including: the WG on Food Safety in Relationship to Religious Dietary Laws, the WG on Ethics in the Food Industry, among others. This will be the second issue of GHI Matters to be carried in AJFAND.

The partnership with AJFAND also means that GHI Matters has the potential to reach more than 20,000 readers globally through the combined email lists and even more when readers look at this open access journal. We are keen to see how this will lead to advancements of all the areas of interest to GHI members and affiliated organizations. Members of GHI are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to publish their articles in the AJFAND journal at an affordable rate and to reach a wider readership. So far, several members have already submitted articles to be published in the journal while many have expressed their appreciation for this partnership. We will be keen to observe the medium-term and long-term impact of this collaboration.

Sadly, this issue also carries the obituary of Prof. Dr. Wenzel Gelderblom, who passed on quietly on the 17th March, 2021. GHI and the world of science will miss him dearly.

I do wish everyone of our readers good health and productive engagements in the coming months.

Any feedback is always welcome and should be directed to the Editor at: Benard.oloo@globalharmonization.net

Benard Oloo, Editor -GHI Matters June, 2021

Anonymous reporting of serious food safety incidents

Sometimes consumers are exposed to food that is contaminated with chemicals, physical materials, or microbes that may cause illness or even deaths. It is possible that this happens and nobody knows about it until the first case of harm is reported. Sometimes, however, people unfortunately knowingly let it happen. This may be for several reasons: one of them is greed, when a business owner tries to earn money by using cheap but unhealthy and/or dangerous ingredients. Or a batch/lot of a product has been found not to be safe and therefore should be recalled, but by not doing so, the company saves money and hopes that nobody will find out that they were responsible for any incidents that occur. Often there are people who know and feel uncomfortable with the situation and report it internally, but are told to move on with their own work or given other excuses as to why it is “nothing” to worry about. In such cases most employees dare not report the information externally, because of the consequences in case their employer finds out who the reporter is. Some employees follow their conscience and the consequence is that, while saving people, they often lose their job and may possibly even suffer worse consequences. That is still the fate of many whistleblowers.

For that reason, the GHI WG on Global Incident Alert Networks developed an anonymous food safety incident reporting webpage. The emphasis is on **anonymous**, while filling in the report on the webpage, the reporter is frequently reminded not to reveal anything that would make it possible to identify the author. To make it possible, however, to judge whether there really is a food safety issue, there are many questions being asked and the completed form will be judged for being of concern by a team of experts. If found to be real and highly likely to not be a fake, GHI will warn the authorities locally or in the country(ies) of export, and ask them to investigate. The English version of the webpage is whistle.globalharmonization.net On the home page for this activity there is a link to "frequently asked questions" where it is explained what measures have been taken to ensure anonymity. It is the intention to provide the same page in many languages.

World Whistleblower Day

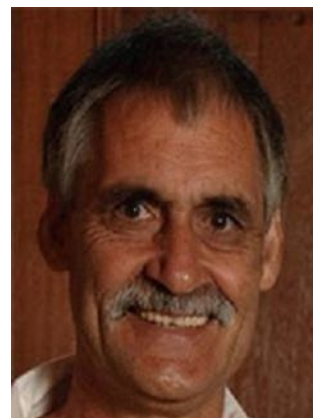
Whistleblowers should be protected not persecuted. World Whistleblower Day (23 June) is an occasion for humanity to celebrate the bold and courageous individuals who detect a problem and come forward to report corruption and other malpractice seeking to achieve justice. Whistle-blowing is paramount. It has a vital role as one of the most effective ways to reduce illegality, prevent corruption and wrongdoing, and help to bring lasting change and to build integrity and encourage transparency in all societies.

Created by a group of NGO working as part of the Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistle-blower Protection in 2019, World Whistleblower Day was created to raise global public awareness of the need to combat corruption.

The Global Harmonisation Initiative (GHI) is celebrating World Whistleblower Day (23 June) at the time its Working Group on Global Incidents Alert Networks is launching its [webpage](#) with complete anonymity for the whistle-blower to limit the consequences of dangerous chemicals added to food and/or the presence of pathogenic microorganisms in food. The system is intended to enable employees (or others with insider knowledge) to report such incidents - that otherwise would not be reported - fully anonymously - hence to effectively protect whistle-blowers.

Obituary of Wentzel Gelderblom

It was a very sad message from his wife, Dalene, that Prof. Dr. Wenzel Gelderblom suddenly and terribly unexpectedly died on 17th March 2021. His wife found him sitting in a chair in front of the TV as if asleep but that regrettably was not so. The morning of the same day he had been running for 5 km, as usual. Wenzel ("Blom" to his friends) was a very kind man and a brilliant scientist. He was also very involved with GHI since before 2010, when he gave a presentation at the GHI session of the IUFoST Congress in Cape Town, South Africa and he was involved in the organisation of the GHI Congress in Leiden, The Netherlands in 2019. He was working on his chapter for the 2nd edition of "Food safety management: A practical guide for the food industry" that he now cannot finish. GHI and the world of science will miss him dearly.



GHI keeps abreast with developments at EFSA

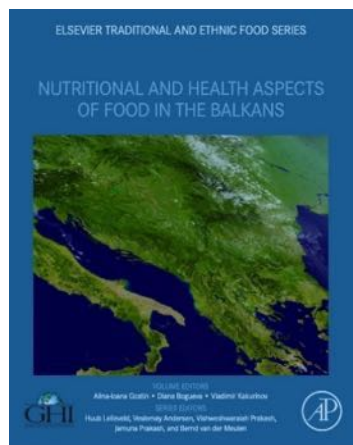
The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is a scientifically independent organisation of the European Union and advises the European Commission (EC) about food safety issues. GHI is an official scientific stakeholder for EFSA and is kept informed about issues that GHI can provide input to EFSA, either if requested or on its own initiative, although the effectiveness of the latter so far is questionable. EFSA currently is addressing issues such as the use of [titanium oxide in food](#); [glyphosate](#); [genotoxicity](#); [antimicrobial resistance and the food production environment](#). For more information you may visit [EFSA's news webpage](#) at any time.

Prof. Dr. Bernd van der Meulen, GHI Board Member and one of the Chairs of the WG on Food Laws & Regulations manages GHI's relations with EFSA.

Covid-19 and Food translations

As announced in the previous issue, the English version of the presentation can be downloaded: Just click [here](#). The Kazakh and Russian versions, produced by Dr. Abdymanap Ospanov, the GHI Ambassador in Kazakhstan, and the Vietnamese version, produced by Dr. Bả Thy Vương, the GHI Ambassador in [Viet Nam](#), can be downloaded from the [presentations page](#) of the Library.

Books



[Nutritional and Health Aspects of Food in the Balkans - 1st Edition - Elsevier](#) has been published through a collaborative effort of GHI members and edited by Alina-Ioana Gostin, Diana Bogueva and Vladimir Kakurinov.

This book provides an analysis of traditional and ethnic foods from the Balkan regions, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and the European part of Turkey. The book addresses the history of use, origin, composition and preparation, ingredient origins and nutritional aspects. For details and ordering, click [here](#).

Remember that when ordering, using the code GHI30 gives you a 30% discount.

How to share information you feel to be of relevance for other members of GHI

GHI Matters provides information that may be useful for its readers. This includes additions to the (digital) library of GHI and announcements of events that are relevant for food safety and security. It may be good to know who to address with information that you want to be published.

Information about articles, chapters in books or entire books, written or edited by members of GHI may be sent to the GHI Librarian, [Abenaa Akyaa Okyere](#). It will be helpful to provide the complete information that is needed to find the publication, often including a web-link. Sometimes publications are difficult to download from the linked website and if permitted, these publications may be uploaded to the GHI Library page. The same applies to publications that are not available on the internet.

Information about events (co-)organized by members of GHI or of interest to GHI because the event is about food safety and security may be sent to the GHI Events Coordinator, [Folake Idowu-Adebayo](#). Apart from all essential information, such as dates and locations and the event's website, it may be helpful to also send the logo for the event.

Finally, any other relevant news may be sent to the editor of this newsletter, [Benard Oloo](#). If you do, try to be short and clear so that no or limited editing will be needed. If you would like to write a longer article for GHI Matters, it may be helpful to discuss this with Benard Oloo in advance.

Articles by members of GHI

Sunlight-activated spray could protect crops

In an [interview in The Academic Times](#) of 27 May 2021, Zivile Luksiene discusses how nanoparticles of zinc oxide may improve food security without using traditional pesticides. In sunlight zinc oxide will produce reactive oxygen species that inactivate microorganisms. Ref.: Bernadeta Zudyte and Zivile Luksiene. Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology B: Biology. Volume 219, June 2021, 112206. Zivile Luksiene is a professor at the Institute of Material Sciences and Applied Research of the Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania.

COVID-19: Food Safety in global food supply chain

An article in Vietnamese, based on the presentation "Covid-19 and Food" produced by the Working Group Food Microbiology and translated into Vietnamese by Dr. Bảo Thy Vương, GHI ambassador in Vietnam. The [article can be downloaded](#) from the GHI Library.

Food safety lessons from the field

An article by Gerald Moy, PhD on 'A mysterious outbreak of sleeping sicknesses' was published in Food Safety Magazine. It presents an interesting case of the difficulties and lessons learned in investigation of foodborne disease outbreaks. The full text can be downloaded [here](#). Gerald G. Moy, Ph.D., is a former staff member of the WHO Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses.

Halal certifiers webpage

The Working Group on Food Safety in Relationship to Religious Dietary Laws has prepared a questionnaire to allow consumers to learn more about the standards being used by the various halal certifying agencies. The questionnaire has gone out to a list of certifiers that was developed with the help of GHI ambassadors. Questionnaires are being returned and are available shortly after submission on the GHI web site. The [home page](#) for this activity lists the certifying agencies (by country) that we are aware of and then has a link to the questionnaire with the agencies that have submitted their material. Please check it out, let your Muslim friends and others who might be interested know about it. If you know of one or more halal certifying agencies that are not on the list, please send that information to jmr9@cornell.edu. Please use the same email address for any comments. *Salaam*.

PS: Any publicity about the availability of this resource would be appreciated.

Regional agribusiness initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa

Regional agribusiness initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa dealing with food safety have an impact on national economies and public health. The food industry makes up most of the factories in Lebanon (18.2%), involves 25% of the total workforce, and produces Lebanon's number one export: food. Regrettably, there is still no food authority in Lebanon. In a short article, Atef Idriss and Manal Makki describe their long-term efforts to develop good and harmonized food safety rules, and use the documents produced by the World Trade

Organization (WTO) and Codex Alimentarius. Even during a pandemic food should remain safe and they developed and provide training in food safety practices for the Middle East and North Africa that should be applied under all circumstances. The [article can be downloaded from the GHI Library](#).

Global sodium benchmarks

WHO launched Global Sodium Benchmarks for Different Food Categories on 5th May, 2021 as a globally harmonized set of benchmarks for more than 60 food categories that define the maximum levels of sodium that these processed foods should contain. Further information regarding the Global Sodium Benchmarks can be accessed [here](#).

Study on remote learning in food studies



IUFOST

Strengthening Global Food Science
and Technology for Humanity

Participate in a study on remote learning in food studies

The IUFOST Working Group 1.2 on Education – Emerging Issues, Key Focus Areas invites university teachers and students in the food area to participate in an inquiry about remote classes on food studies. We kindly ask you to respond to the following survey: <http://www.cnpsa.embrapa.br/survey/index.php/235992?lang=en>

The Covid-19 pandemic struck the world by surprise, which resulted in a sudden change in the way classes were delivered. Emergency teaching methods were adopted all over the world to be able to continue instruction. In the field of food, including but not limited to food science, technology, and engineering, instructors were faced with numerous challenges to create and deliver adequate teaching materials to their students.

The objective of this survey is to evaluate how *online* classes in the field of food studies, defined broadly, were delivered during the Covid-19 pandemic, and to assess the satisfaction level of students and instructors regarding the teaching practices adopted during that time. This questionnaire will not take you more than 10 minutes to answer.

The IUFOST WG 1.2 Education – Emerging Issues, Key Focus Areas acknowledges your contribution.

IUFOST: www.iufost.org, General Secretariat: secretariat@iufost.org

Events

Fi AFRICA 2021 event



📅 02 - 04 August 2021
📍 Egypt International Exhibition Center

For over three days, the Africa Food Manufacturing and Middle East Food Safety Associates (MEFOSA), will bring together the top food and beverage industry experts to share their knowledge and experience with participants, both physically and virtually, to learn, gather insights about the latest trends, and technology, regulations, market gaps, and potential market expansions in Africa and the Middle East. The event will run from 2-4th August, 2021. Details about the event are available [here](#).

Biofilm and food processing

The GHI Ambassador in Iran, Dr. Hamid Ezzatpanah, produced an extensive GHI presentation (in English) about biofilm and food processing. It is intended for teaching food handlers, students, researchers, and faculty members, as well as GHI ambassadors who are - and for some of these groups should - be interested in learning about the subject that is very important for food safety. It is a long and complete presentation, including many references as well as clear pictures, and may have to be split into various parts, depending on the audience and the time available. The presentation may be [downloaded](#) from the [GHI Library](#). The author is willing to give online courses based on the presentation. For more information, contact [Dr. Ezzatpanah](#).

World Food Safety Day (WFSD)-2021-reports from around the world

The WFSD was instituted by the WHO in 2018 and should be "celebrated" every year on the 7th of June. This year's theme was "Safe food now for a healthy tomorrow" and aimed to draw attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect, and manage foodborne risks, while contributing to food security and health. Several GHI ambassadors addressed various audiences on that day.

Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Martinović, director of FoodHub, the Centre of Excellence of the University of Donja Gorica in Montenegro and GHI Ambassador in that country, organised a round-table discussion "Food safety culture in Montenegro - The path to a healthy nation", where our President gave a presentation about GHI with a focus on malpractices that affect many consumers around the world and how GHI will try to reduce the risk by launching the "Anonymous reporting of serious food safety incidents" webpage, about which there is more information above.

Atef Idriss, our MENA (Middle East and Northern Africa) Councilor nominated Dr. Ahmad Safar, Ms. Manal Makki and Ms. Nourhan Abdul Razzak as WFSD champions in MENA in recognition of their early engagement in about 20 distant and virtual webinars on food safety aiming to alert and address value-chain stakeholders on the issues of relevance. For those interested in food security in MENA, it may be of interest to read about a round-table discussion on "food processing and agro-industrial production" in which Atef Idriss

participated and that has been published in the "Executive Magazine" issue of April - May 2021. The article is now uploaded [here](#).

[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 the European Engineering and Design Group ([EHEDG](#)). The goal of GHI is "Achieving consensus on the science of food regulations and legislations to ensure the global availability of safe and wholesome food products for all consumers".

GHI has legal non-profit entity status, registered in Austria as "GHI-Association - Globale Harmonisierungs Initiative für Gesetze und Verordnungen im Bereich Lebensmittel", ZVRnumber 453446383.