



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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GLOBAL HARMONIZATION INITIATIVE LAUNCHES ANONYMOUS WHISTLEBLOWER FOOD SAFETY INCIDENT REPORT SITE

The new online site will help anyone who works in the food and beverage industry anywhere in the world to report serious food safety incidents without the risk of being identified.

(Vienna, Austria) August 9, 2021 – The **Global Harmonization Initiative (GHI)** is pleased to announce the launch of the **Whistleblower Food Safety Incident Report Site**. This is available at: <https://whistle.globalharmonization.net> to anyone, in any country, who works in the food and beverage industry.

"Across the world, most food industry employees dare not report information about safety concerns externally because of the consequences of their employer finding out who they are. Some employees follow their conscience and the consequence is, that while saving people from harm, they often lose their job and may possibly suffer worse consequences. That is still the fate of many whistleblowers. For that reason, the GHI has developed an anonymous food safety incident reporting site. The emphasis is on anonymous and we have taken web-based privacy safeguards to ensure this. While filling in the online report, the reporter is also frequently reminded not to reveal anything that would make it possible to identify themselves" states Huub Lelieveld, GHI president.

Everyday, everywhere, the food and beverage industry provides safe, wholesome and enjoyable products for the world's population. However, sometimes, food is produced, by accident or in some cases on purpose, that does not meet required safety standards. This is a serious concern and something that GHI would like to help prevent.

Food safety issues are a threat to public health, with the potential to cause harm to consumers, and at worst sometimes death. Food safety issues are a threat to the world's population and can prevent people having access to enough, safe, nutritious food. In every country, the reporting of food safety incidents is on the rise, this is thought to be due mainly to improved surveillance and reporting systems. Also, of help, is the increased food safety awareness of consumers and of the people working in manufacturing, processing and the supply of foods and drinks. Reported food safety incidents are, however, only the tip of the iceberg. Hidden from view are many unreported occurrences that happen every day in every country of the world.

In the worst cases, food safety issues can be down to careless practices i.e. not following procedures, or not having correct processes in place. Criminal minds are also a significant cause of food safety concern. Deliberate fraudulent activities include using inferior or banned ingredients to increase profits, and all at the risk of causing harm to consumers.

Food safety values and legislation will differ between countries. National governments enforce these in different ways. Official national whistleblower schemes exist in some countries too. These are put in place for people who want to report food safety concerns. They vary in the level of protection they can provide to the whistleblowers.

Even with the level of protection that some countries provide, people can still be in fear of whistleblower schemes, especially where they might be identified. Because of this and with the increasing need for fast alerting of food safety issues, GHI has set up an easily accessible online reporting tool - the **Whistleblower Food Safety Incident Report Site**. This online site is for use by anyone working in the food supply chain, in any country across the world, concerned about the safety of a product or process within a food company. Most importantly it is anonymous. Currently available in English, the site is soon to be made available in local languages.

All of the serious incident reports that GHI receives will be evaluated by a team of food safety experts. For those concerns that GHI confirms as "serious" (i.e. that could cause serious harm to consumers), GHI will inform the local authorities within the country of interest and ask them to investigate. The site is being launched together with a social media awareness campaign for people working in the food and beverage industry, to report any serious safety concerns that they have. See infographic below.

Would you let your family eat the food you make at work?

Concerned about the safety of food produced at work and unable to voice your concern? Report it anonymously to <https://whistle.globalharmonization.net>

Global Harmonization Initiative

GHI Whistleblower Food Safety Incident Report Site

Facebook: GHI4FoodSafety **Twitter:** @GHI4FoodSafety **LinkedIn:** global-harmonization-initiative

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The **Global Harmonization Initiative (GHI)** is an international network of individual scientists and scientific organizations working together to promote harmonization of global food safety regulations and legislation through sound science. GHI advocates science-based global harmonization of food safety laws and regulations that will eliminate trade barriers masquerading as food safety protections, to help reduce world hunger and increase food security for all. GHI is a non-profit organization registered in Vienna, Austria. For more, visit www.globalharmonization.net

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