



CANADIAN SUPPLY CHAIN FOOD SAFETY COALITION

COALITION CANADIENNE DE LA FILIÈRE ALIMENTAIRE POUR LA SALUBRITÉ DES ALIMENTS

**Food Safety Auditor Qualifications and Competencies Project
Exploring Optional Paths for Canada**

**Report on the 2nd Workshop
13 March 2012
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada**

Table of Contents

1.0	Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition	3
2.0	Project Background	4
3.0	Project Objective	7
4.0	The Process.....	8
5.0	Summary of the March Workshop Presentations	10
6.0	Exploring Optional Paths for Canada.....	20
7.0	Identification of Common Ground for Canada’s Path	29
8.0	Moving Forward - Next Steps to Getting There	32
9.0	Conclusion	34
	Annex A – Workshop Participants.....	35
	Annex B – Workshop Agenda	36
	Annex C – Café Discussion Notes on Options.....	37
	Annex D – Small Group Notes on Moving Forward: Next Steps to Getting There	43

Version 1 – 28 March 2012 was reviewed by Workshop participants during April 2012.

Version 2 – 14 May 2012 has been edited to clarify some points and to permit other minor corrections.

1.0 Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition

The Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition was formed in December 2000 and incorporated in 2007 by national associations representing all segments of the food chain from input suppliers through primary production, processing, manufacturing, transportation, distribution to final marketing at retail or in food service. It is a unique organization that is open to all national, provincial and local industry associations with an interest in food safety.

Vision: Canada's agriculture, fisheries and food industry will have a world-class reputation for producing and selling safe food.

Mission: The Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition will facilitate, through dialogue within the food industry and with all levels of government, the development and implementation of a national, coordinated approach to food safety to ensure credibility in domestic and international marketplaces.

Since its foundation it has undertaken a number of special projects and held several forums and other workshops to foster the discussion of food safety in Canada. Information related to these can be found on its website at: www.foodsafetycoalition.ca The Coalition also advocates directly with all levels of government, but particularly through a set of relationships with key federal departments (e.g. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada) and the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Food Safety Committee.

2.0 Project Background

As part of its mission to facilitate dialogue and to encourage the development of a national approach to food safety, the Coalition in 2008 initiated a project to engage the agri-food industry and governments in the development of a National Strategy for Industry-led Food Safety Programs. This project was completed and the report published in March of 2009¹. This final report identified a set of four (4) principles upon which the strategy is grounded:

Principle #1: Food safety is a shared responsibility of all participants in the supply chain, input suppliers, businesses involved with the production, processing, manufacturing, importing, distribution, retailing and marketing of food, all levels of government and consumers;

Principle #2: Governments at all levels, the agri-food industry and other stakeholders should foster and facilitate the development of an integrated, co-ordinated, and national approach to food safety policy and regulation based on sound scientific risk assessment and risk management principles and on international standards.

Principle #3: Industry and government food safety initiatives should encourage the implementation of HACCP and/or HACCP-based food safety systems by businesses all along the supply chain.

Principle #4: Food businesses, governments and other stakeholders have a responsibility to adequately resource, proactively manage, update, maintain and continually improve their individual and collaborative food safety systems and food safety initiatives.

The Strategy also identified:

- (i) a set of seven (7) goals for the Canadian food safety system in 2013;
- (ii) specific actions that could be taken to realize these goals;
- (iii) the parties responsible for implementing the actions; and,
- (iv) milestones that could be utilized to assess progress in achieving the identified goals and actions.

Goal #3 expressed industry's expectations for strengthening Canada's food safety training and auditing infrastructure and Action 3.2 spoke specifically to the matter of defining the requirements for 3rd party, industry and government auditors in the context of emerging international requirements.

¹ <http://www.foodsafetycoalition.ca/upload/File/National%20Strategy%20for%20Industry-led%20Food%20Safety%20Programs%20-%20Final%20Version%20-%2031%20March%202009.pdf>

Strategic Area: Industry		
Goal: #3 – Strengthen Canada’s Food Safety Training and Auditing Infrastructure		
Actions	Responsibility	Milestones
3.1 Strengthen food safety training programs by utilizing on-line tools, diversifying the availability of training across languages, and harmonizing protocols across jurisdictions	3.3 Industry associations as program owners, governments and other stakeholders, including educational institutions and training organizations	3.3 .1 Accessible food safety training for food businesses implementing industry-led food safety programs, employees, etc 3,3,2 National recognition of employee food safety training programs (e.g. foodservice, etc)
3.2 Define Canadian food safety auditor requirements for 3 rd party, industry and government auditors in the context of the emerging international requirements	3.2 CSCFSC initiative to engage associations, FPT governments and other stakeholders	3.2 National set of requirements for food safety auditors suitable for each segment of the supply chain and for both 3 rd party and government food safety auditors
3.3 Improve auditor training and audit consistency	3.3. Industry as program owners (through Working Groups if continued or established), and other stakeholders, including educational institutions and auditor training organizations	3.3 Greater sharing and alignment, where appropriate, of training programs and requirements

The discussions leading up to the development of the National Strategy were not the first time that this issue had been identified. Earlier, in 2004, industry and government participants in a *Government/Industry Forum on Integrating Food Safety Systems in Canada*² hosted by the Coalition and three federal/provincial/territorial committees dealing with food safety considered the current situation in Canada respecting food safety auditor training and qualifications, including the on-farm food safety auditor training program recently established by the Canadian On-Farm Food Safety (COFFS) Working Group and global developments. While the Forum made no recommendations, the breakout sessions that reviewed this matter all concluded that ensuring a trained supply of qualified food safety auditors was a priority and that this could require:

- development of core competencies for auditors for all sectors along the food chain (perhaps through the use of national standards);
- credentialing for multi-sector or multi-commodity food safety auditors;

² <http://www.foodsafetycoalition.ca/upload/Forum%20report%20final%202004.pdf>

- identification of methods for determining equivalency;
- development of cost effective auditor training capacity; and,
- exploration of the need for government oversight.

The 2009 National Strategy allocated responsibility for following up on Action 3.2 to the Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition. After further discussions with its members, with other stakeholders and with governments, the Coalition applied for and received funding in the fall of 2011 from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada under the Canadian Food Safety and Traceability Initiative, a Growing Forward program, to undertake a project.

3.0 Project Objective

The Coalition's *Food Safety Auditor Qualifications and Competencies Project* is intended to engage its members and other stakeholders, including the federal, provincial and territorial governments, other industry associations, academic institutions, participants in the national standards system, etc. in a dialogue on food safety auditor qualifications and competencies in Canada.

The objective of this dialogue is twofold:

- First, it will provide an opportunity to share information and to identify issues with respect to private and public sector requirements, international standards and developments globally in the field of food safety auditor qualifications and competencies; and,
- Second, it will determine if there is a consensus as to whether or not a Canadian approach to food safety auditor qualifications and competencies is required and if so, how it can be achieved and what infrastructure needs there might be to implement and sustain it.

4.0 Project Process

This twofold objective is to be realized through two workshops and an iterative process of validation of the resulting recommendation(s).

The 1st Workshop was held on 17 January 2012 and focused on information sharing and issue identification. A summary report from this first session was circulated in February 2011.

The 2nd Workshop was held on 13 March 2012, facilitated by Sue Cass from One World Inc, an external facilitator. This report summarizes the results of the 2nd Workshop, which focused on exploring paths for Canada through plenary and small group discussions and identifying common ground for moving forward. The workshop agenda is included in Annex A. The participant list is included in Annex B.

The specific objectives of the 2nd Workshop were:

1. To begin to shape a consensus on the direction that Canada could take with respect to the qualifications and competencies of both private sector and public sector food safety auditors
2. To identify steps to reaching that objective, and
3. To scope out the infrastructure needs vis-à-vis this critical component of the food safety system for the coming decades.

A presentation served as launchpoint for discussion, highlighting what is happening on the world stage regarding food safety qualifications and competencies. To work towards common ground, participants considered four possible options for Canada with respect to qualifications and competencies of food safety auditors (the options are presented in Section 6.0). Three rounds of discussion in small groups provided participants with the opportunity to discuss each option using a Café approach, with each round building on the ideas shared in the previous round. The following key questions guided discussion:

- *For this to be a compelling path for Canada to follow over the next 2-3 years, what would the ideal end outcome be?*
- *What would be the main impediments or drawbacks to following this path?*
- *If this is a compelling path what are the critical success factors that will need to be in place and/or essential processes that will need to be undertaken to assure the ideal outcome is achieved (e.g. process steps, key infrastructure needs)?*

After the Café and plenary discussion, participants were asked to prioritize their first and second choice options for the most compelling path moving forward. In plenary, they discussed the results of the prioritizing activity, what had emerged as the likely first choice option and then the wording of the final

option that described the best direction that Canada could take with respect to the qualifications and competencies of food safety auditors. As a final exercise, participants identified and discussed possible next steps for moving forward.

Following this 2nd Workshop, participants will be asked to review and validate a report. This report will then be electronically circulated to a broader audience, including stakeholders that could not participate in the workshops, for their consideration and electronic validation.

Subsequent to this consultation a final report will be prepared and published in the spring of 2012.

5.0 Summary of the March Workshop Presentations

5.1 Welcome and Workshop Scope

Participants in the Workshop were welcomed by the Co-chair of the Coalition, Ms. Susan Abel. Ms. Abel outlined the role and history of the Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition (CFCSC), its major activities and set the scene for the Food Safety Auditor Competencies and Qualifications Project. She reviewed the Project's objectives and provided background information, noting that by 2004, it was apparent that new international standards were emerging (e.g. ISO & GFSI) and that some countries, such as Australia, had already begun to debate national standards for auditor competency.

In 2008/2009, the continued importance of the issue was noted as was its inclusion in the recommended Actions in the Coalition's National Strategy for Industry-led Food Safety Programs. The National Strategy identified seven goals, two of which deal with training and food safety auditing. The current project is aimed at moving forward one of the actions under Goal 3 - Strengthen Canada's Food Safety Training and Auditing Infrastructure:

3.2 Define Canadian food safety auditor requirements for 3rd party, industry and government auditors in the context of the emerging international requirements.

Ms. Abel indicated that while the 1st workshop focused on information-sharing and issue identification, this 2nd workshop is intended (i) to facilitate good dialogue, (ii) to shape a consensus on a direction that Canada could take with respect to the qualifications and competencies of food safety auditors and (iii) to identify next steps. A final report outlining the agreed upon course of action will be developed and circulated in June 2012.

In conclusion, she acknowledged Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada as the primary funder of the project as part of the Canadian Integrated Food Safety Initiative under the FPT Growing Forward program.

5.2 Highlights of What is Happening on the World Stage Regarding Food Safety Qualifications and Competencies

Mr. Albert Chambers, Executive Director for CSCFSC provided highlights of what is happening on the world stage regarding food safety qualifications and competencies. He based his presentation on the version 2 of the background document circulated to participants in advance of the workshop, *Requirements for Food Safety Auditors: Examples from Private and Public Sectors in Canada and Internationally*. The presentation and document are posted on the CSCFSC web site.

Mr. Chambers presentation began with a review of definitions followed by a high level summary of public sector initiatives in Canada, Australia, and the United States and private sector initiatives at the international level through the ISO and GFSI. Definitions are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Definitions

Auditor: person who conducts an audit

Qualifications: quality or accomplishment that makes someone suitable for a particular job or activity

Competence: ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results

Management system: system to establish policy and objectives and to achieve those objectives

Credentials:

Licensure: a credential that implies someone has some basic level of knowledge and skills to protect the public from harm. This is usually entry level, government regulated and mandatory.

Certification: a credential that implies someone has a certain level of knowledge and skills. This is usually professionally oriented, non-governmental, and voluntary.

Certificate: a designation awarded after completion of a training/education program. It is based on the content of the program and is awarded for life.

5.2.1 Canadian Initiatives

The research has identified that there are important developments in Canada in this field, for example:

- the inclusion of food safety auditor requirements in the National On-Farm/Post-Farm Food Safety Recognition Programs;
- the intention of CFIA to harmonize and update requirements for its food safety inspectors/auditors as a key component of its Inspection Modernization Project;
- the development by some provinces of new requirements for provincial inspectors as part of the FPT meat hygiene initiative and of the re-assumption of responsibilities for provincial inspection; and
- the adoption of GFSI requirements by industry-led schemes that are benchmarked by that scheme.

Mr. Chambers briefly discussed the private sector requirements under the national recognition programs (on-farm and post-farm) and the public sector requirements under the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Inspection Modernization initiative.

The On-Farm Food Safety (OFFS) recognition program has set requirements that are primarily qualifications based. It is the responsibility of schemes to propose requirements, provide training and maintain approvals.

The Post-Farm recognition program includes two levels, one for HACCP systems and one for HACCP-based schemes. This program uses qualifications-based requirements.

The CFIA works with multiple Acts and Regulations. CFIA's current competencies include a combination of technical and non-technical requirements. Its Inspection Modernization initiative aims to create a consolidated and improved training program that keeps regulatory inspectors current of best practices and scientific advances. The 2012 project plan for the initiative includes the following items:

- Review and analyse international food safety inspection systems and inspector competencies to identify best practices and standards.
- Network with New Zealand, Australia and United States to observe and analyze inspection systems, methodologies, tools and approaches.
- Complete an analysis of competencies required by inspectors and integrate in the horizontal approach to training and recruitment.

5.2.2 Australian Example

In Australia, the food regulatory system comprises a complex web of participants. Three key players include:

- the Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council;
- the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC);
- the Australian, New Zealand and State and Territory departments and agencies responsible for food regulation policy and for informing the Ministerial Council and FRSC.

Australia arrived at its current set of food safety auditor requirements and its approach to certification and approval over a 13 year process beginning in 1999/2001. It started with a Working Group on Safety and Quality Systems, followed by the establishment of new Australian food standards (2001 to present) and a series of initiatives resulting in a National Food Safety Auditing Framework (2002) and proposed national competency criteria and management systems for food safety auditor competency (2003/04).

The current National Food Safety Auditing Framework takes a risk-based approach (high, medium, low) and is based on a core curriculum with assessments set out in national standards for:

- auditor competencies (national units of competency);
- technical and educational qualifications;
- specialised auditing competencies;
- witness audits & legislative assessment;
- regulatory food safety auditor code of conduct; and,
- application of pre-approval additional provisions.

From 2003 to 2006, an Implementation Sub-Committee (ISC) Audit Working Group developed a national food safety audit implementation policy to promote consistency in the management of food safety auditors and auditing within Australia. In 2005, a National Food Safety Auditor Certification Scheme Committee was established to develop a national food safety auditor certification scheme.

The final results of this initiative are:

- A personnel certification scheme for food safety auditors (the National Food Safety Auditor Scheme), established using ISO 17024 and operated by RABQSA, a private sector Australian-based training and personnel certification body. The Scheme encompasses first, second and third party food safety auditors and is applied throughout the supply chain and across commercial and regulatory boundaries. It is based on auditor competency and food safety risk, aiming to provide objectivity, rigour and a national scope of operation.
- Regulatory Food Safety Auditors requirements based on a national policy, guidelines and framework which were fully implemented in October 2011 and apply to government auditors (Commonwealth/State/Territorial) and third party auditors doing regulatory audits. There are competency criteria, approval processes and other measures in place.

5.2.3 ISO Standards

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has published the primary international accreditation standards for certification bodies engaged in the audit and certification of food safety management systems. These include:

- ISO/IEC Guide 65 – General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems;
- ISO/IEC 17021: 2011 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems; and,
- ISO/TS 22003: 2007 – Food safety management systems – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems.

Mr. Chambers focused his presentation on ISO/TS 22003: 2007 which is emerging as the core requirements for food safety auditors and other related certification personnel.

ISO/TS 22003:2007:

- builds on the foundation of ISO/IEC 17021: 2006;
- uses a combined qualifications and basic competencies (limited details) approach; and,
- covers food safety auditors involved in certification, personnel involved in contract review and certification decision-making, and technical experts.

The standard has been incorporated into the Global Food Safety Initiative and will be revised in 2012/13 based on ISO/IEC 17021: 2011 to including new requirements. It will be linked to the new standard ISO/IEC 17065 which covers requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.

ISO 22003's auditor qualifications cover: Education – knowledge at the post-secondary level with both general microbiology and chemistry plus courses in food industry category;

- Food Safety Training – training in HACCP, hazard assessment and analysis, food safety management principles and prerequisite programs for hygiene (PRPs);
- Audit Training – based on ISO 19011 and relevant FSMS standards;
- Work Experience – minimum 5 years full-time work in the food chain-related industry, with a minimum of 2 years in quality assurance and food safety; and,
- Audit Experience – 12 FSMS audit days in 4 organizations under the supervision of an experienced auditor.

Its auditor competencies require the demonstration of the ability to apply a body of skills and knowledge (BOSK), including:

- Audit principles;
- Management system and reference documents;
- Organizational situations;
- Applicable laws, regulations, other requirements; and,
- Food Safety – HACCP, PRPs, hazard identification, control measures determination/implementation/ management, etc,

Mr. Chambers concluded by noting that ISO/IEC 17021 includes two annexes which relate to food safety auditor qualifications and competencies:

- Annex A lists required knowledge and skills based on various certification functions
- Annex B lists possible evaluation methods, including review of records (e.g., qualifications, reports, appraisals), feedback (e.g., past employers, auditors, peers, clients), interviews (various types), observations and examinations (written, oral, practical).

5.2.4 GFSI Guidance Document 6 and Auditor Competence Project

Mr. Chambers provided an overview of current developments in the revision of auditor requirements for the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI). Current requirements are included in the *GFSI Guidance Document, Sixth Edition, Issue 2, Version 6.1 (August 2011)*.

The fifth edition of the GFSI guidance document referenced standard ISO/TS 22003. The sixth edition adds ISO/TS 17021 and currently uses a qualifications approach, with requirements for education, work

experience, formal auditor training, certification body (CB)/scheme training, audit experience and scope (14) requirements.

In 2010, a GFSI Technical Working Group (TWG) was formed to move forward the GFSI Auditor Competence Project. The project scope includes defining generic food safety auditor competencies (technical, managerial, communications, personnel, legal and auditing) in the GFSI context. It has adopted the ISO definition of competence and the TWG undertook a task analysis (knowledge and skills, risk-based) and identified options for acquisition and assessment, and personal attributes (knowledge and skills). The project objectives are to:

- Improve integrity, consistency & reliability;
- Improve cost/benefit in qualifying auditors by CBs;
- Provide clearly articulated pathway for professional development; and,
- Protect the GFSI franchise.

Mr. Chambers outlined the specific requirements under each of the following three groups of generic food safety auditor competencies included in the GFSI Project (see Table 2):

1. Auditing skills and knowledge;
2. Technical skills and knowledge; and,
3. Behavior and systems thinking.

Mr. Chambers reported that in February 2012, the TWG made recommendations for GFSI competency requirements. These competency requirements will now proceed to a validation step and subsequent inclusion in the revised Guidance Document. The TWG also made recommendations for short and long-term implementation.

Recommendations for short-term implementation (up to 2 years) are:

- Harmonize current schemes with respect to auditor food categories;
- Implement GFSI current requirements with all Accreditation Bodies (AB);
- New requirements for AB's assessors;
- Harmonize requirements (ISO 22003) for all Certification Bodies (CB), including those using Guide 65;
- Develop common auditor competency assessment tools for CBs; and,
- Participate in revision of ISO 22003.

Recommendations for long-term implementation (beyond 2 years) are:

- Form stakeholder committee consistent with ISO 17024 requirements; and,
- Establish guidelines for personnel certification schemes for accredited, certified auditors

Table 2. GFSI Auditor Competence Project – Generic Food Safety Auditor Competencies

Auditing Skills and Knowledge

- 1.1 Plan and organise work effectively
- 1.2 Conduct the audit within the agreed timeframe
- 1.3 Communicate with auditee personnel at all levels
- 1.4 Collect evidence by conducting interviews
- 1.5 Collect evidence by observation and inquiry
- 1.6 Collect evidence by review of documentation and records
- 1.7 Analyse, verify and consolidate audit evidence and generate audit findings
- 1.8 Prepare written audit reports

Technical Skills & Knowledge

- 2.1 Food Safety Management (FSM) Requirements – GFSI Scheme Scopes (Tables I, II, III, IV, V)
- 2.2 Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practice (GAP) Requirements – GFSI Scheme Scopes (Tables VI, VII, VIII, IX) – not completed by February 2012
- 2.3 Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Requirements – GFSI Scheme Scopes (Tables X, XI)
- 2.4 HACCP Requirements – GFSI Scheme Scopes (Tables XII, XIII, XIV)

Behaviour & Systems Thinking

- 3.1 Auditor Conduct and Behaviour
 - Personal behaviour
 - Audit leadership
- 3.2 Systems Thinking
 - Critical thinking
 - Problem solving
 - Root cause analysis
- 3.3 Organizational Behaviour
 - Business and organisational practices

5.2.5 US Developments

Mr. Chambers also discussed recent developments in the US where the current direction is to establish new requirements for the competency of both domestic and foreign food safety auditors in both the public and private sectors and to establish new assessment expectations, including the use of accredited personnel certification bodies.

There are currently two streams of discussion of qualifications and competencies in the US:

1. Government auditors/inspectors doing inspection (Food and Drug Administration (FDA), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), state and local); and,
2. Third party auditors, primarily for foreign facilities (governments or certification bodies) acting for FDA or for importers under the Foreign Verified Supplier Program (FVSP) or the Voluntary Qualified Importer Program (VQIP).

In 2008, the Partnership for Food Protection was initiated under the Bush administration's project for an Integrated Food Safety System and then endorsed in 2010 by the Obama administration. The goals of the Partnership are to:

- Develop and implement a national food safety training system that provides the knowledge and skills needed to perform job functions to regulators and public health partners at all levels;
- Develop and implement a national certification system to help assure both uniform and consistent performance of staff involved in all aspects of food safety including inspection, compliance, laboratory analysis, epidemiological investigation, and emergency response at the international, federal, state, local, territorial and tribal levels.

The PFP approach includes:

- Training infrastructure (including new institutes);
- Core curriculum based on regulatory requirements and a task analysis to define competencies;
- Standards for quality of training; and,
- Personnel certification based on "valid and defensible" job task analysis, rigorously designed assessment tools, a variety of assessment processes, and consistent with ISO 17024.

The FDA's current Guidance (released in 2009) for requirements of third party auditors, specify that they must meet or exceed requirements for FDA Consumer Safety Officers (CSOs), have bachelor's and higher degrees, list competencies in a number of areas, and require field training of a minimum of 5 joint audits with a qualified trainer, two of which are witnessed by a qualified trainer, with additional field training required in specialized areas (3 joint audits).

FDA has recently issued a contract to the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) to develop a personnel certification scheme for foreign and third party auditors. The details of this project are limited but it is expected to mirror the requirements of the PFP project.

5.2.6 Conclusion

Mr. Chambers concluded by noting the complexity of the subject of food safety audatory qualifications and competencies. He noted that developments in this area are evolving quickly, with a strong emphasis on demonstration of competence and independent personnel certification. There is increasing convergence among public and private sector requirements and international standards/schemes. And finally, there are multiple models in place to explore and borrow from if the decision is to take action in Canada.

5.3 Questions/Comments

The facilitator invited questions or comments from participants related to the information shared in the presentation.

Although they are harmonizing at the GFSI level, what is the amenability of the individual standards bodies to accept such auditor credentials?

There has been a lot of discussion related to acceptance by schemes of the new auditor requirements. GFSI will include them in a revised Guidance Document, making them mandatory. However, harmonization of the auditor categories is still a problem. The expectation is that the scheme owners and GFSI will embark on a process together to cross-reference the current categories to know how and where they fit with the new requirements. It is difficult to anticipate how this process will evolve.

A participant indicated that they had not yet seen a revised GFSI Guidance Document that sets out criteria for certification of auditors. When will the Guidance Document be released?

The process of circulating the new requirements for validation will start in sometime in 2012 and is expected to follow the process outlined in ISO 17024 for competency/standards development. Following validation of the preliminary task analysis, tools will be developed. Then, likely sometime in 2013, the Guidance Document would be revised. It was noted that there are several processes unfolding in parallel: the revision of the GFSI Guidance Document, the new US initiative, and the revision of ISO 22003. It was noted that there will be people engaged in all three fora whose interest it will be to have as much consistency as possible amongst the results.

What is the major focus for change in ISO 22003?

The base standard, ISO 17021 was revised in 2011. So for 22003, the central question is whether or not there any food safety management system characteristics that need to be included. When ISO 22003 was initially developed in 2007, it was understood that the process had not gone far enough in defining competency requirements. The revision is likely, therefore, to deepen the competency requirements; this could take the form of a normative annex to standard ISO 22003. Multi-site auditing is another contentious issue that will probably be revisited. There are also challenges with ISO 22003's food safety categories. These cover the whole supply chain but should they be broken down further. At this time,

there is nothing specific on the table but the first meeting starts on March 19th, so the discussions are still evolving.

In reviewing the various competency programs, has consideration been given to the existing pools of food safety auditors currently in practice and how they would be brought up to the new standards?

There has been limited discussion on that issue at the GFSI TWG. If revision requires that a food safety auditor must be certified from an accredited scheme, then all food safety auditors would be required to undertake the necessary certification process to demonstrate qualifications and competency. Automatic grandfathering would likely not be an option; however, there would be transition periods. If a food safety auditor is competent, he/she should be able to demonstrate this under the new assessment approach.

The GFSI TWG did not complete the definition of competencies for good agriculture practices. Was time a factor, were there other reasons? When do they expect to have this included?

It is unclear when this will be completed. There are large components of what has already been done that applies to auditors who are auditing primary agriculture. There are additional requirements for packaging and primary agriculture that have not been completed. The issue of auditing a HACCP approach vs HACCP-based approach has also not yet been resolved.

Safe Quality Food (SFQ) has combined the 1000 and 2000 in its new edition. Once there are revisions, is the intent to approach schemes for GFSI recognition? One of the recommendations from the TWG will be for harmonization within the GFSI to the highest level for 17021/22003, focusing specifically on areas of competence and certification. This will impact on the ISO Guide 65 accredited schemes.

6.0 Exploring Optional Paths for Canada

Following the presentations, participants considered four possible options for Canada with respect to qualifications and competencies of food safety auditors. Three rounds of discussion in small groups provided participants with the opportunity to discuss each option using a Café approach, whereby participants rotated around stations and with each round reviewed and built upon the ideas shared in the previous round. This section presents the questions which guided discussion, the potential pathways and highlights of participant discussion.

6.1 The Potential Pathways:

OPTION A

Canada continues on its current track, including: implementation of the National On-Farm/Post-Farm Recognition Programs food safety auditor requirements, of CFIA's inspection modernization project and of separate provincial government initiatives; and, the adoption, as required, of GFSI's benchmarking requirements by Canadian schemes.

OPTION B

Canada monitors the international scene (e.g. GFSI, ISO, US FSMA, etc.) and prepares to adapt to new international expectations and standards (e.g. competency requirements, assessment approaches and certification options) by strengthening its capacity and infrastructure.

OPTION C

Canada monitors the international scene (e.g. GFSI, ISO, US FSMA, etc.) and prepares to adapt to new international expectations and standards (e.g. competency requirements, assessment approaches and certification options) and the public and private sectors work to identify what characteristics specific to Canada also need to be integrated into Canadian food safety auditor qualifications and competencies.

OPTION D

Canadian private and public sectors work together to develop a shared/collective Canadian view of food safety auditor qualifications and competencies, assessment approaches and certification options and actively engage to bring the Canadian view into the international processes underway.

6.2 The Questions:

1. For this to be a compelling path for Canada to follow over the next 2-3 years, what would the ideal end outcome be?
2. What would be the main impediments or drawbacks to following this path?
3. If this is a compelling path what are the critical success factors that will need to be in place and/or essential processes that will need to be undertaken to assure the ideal outcome is achieved (e.g. process steps, key infrastructure needs)?

6.3 The Comments

Annex C includes the detailed notes from the Café discussion for each optional path. This section summarizes key points of discussion for the three guiding questions above.

6.3.1 IDEAL END OUTCOME

Interestingly, participants identified increased credibility as an ideal end outcome for all options. This suggests that any path forward could potentially lead to a more credible system for demonstrating food safety auditor competency. Participants also identified consistency as an ideal outcome for Options A and B, with Option A specifying consistency of auditor competency across third party/industry and government.

Ideal end outcomes identified that are unique to each option are as follows:

Option A, with its focus on continuing on Canada's current track and adapting to new GFSI benchmarking schemes, could lead to:

- Recognition of the work done to date, specifically, the Canadian approach of government working with industry to build the CFIA-led National Food Safety Recognition Programs.
- A system where cooperative processes are in place, where sectors are able to remain flexible, where government oversees private sector programs and formally recognizes them, and where credible private sector schemes meet international standards.
- Government being more clear and accountable to the public regarding what schemes meet standards of credibility; this would be a step further than what is already in place with the CFIA FSRP.

Option B, with its focus on monitoring and adapting to the international scene by strengthening Canada's capacity and infrastructure, could lead to:

- Efficiency and effectiveness in moving forward by waiting for results of other processes (GFSI, ISO, US).

- Alignment with international expectations, and therefore, enhancement and protection of Canada's international market.
- Strengthened capacity and infrastructure.

Option C, with its focus on the public and private sector identifying the Canada-specific characteristics that need to be integrated into competencies, along with adaptations to international standards, could lead to:

- Harmonized core competency criteria between countries (still benchmarked to GFSI (?) and including first, second and third party auditors).
- An assigned, independent authority for developing, monitoring and maintaining Canadian characteristics for food safety auditor competencies, linking knowledge, skills and competencies to sectors and commodities, in alignment with the Canadian context³ (assumes adding to the adopted common core from the global food safety scheme).
- Access to international markets and avoidance of litigation.
- A cost-efficient, credible system that has the potential to be recognized internationally (assumes convergence and adaptation to international schemes).

Option D, with its focus on developing a shared/collective Canadian view of competencies and assessment approaches that is actively brought into international processes, could lead to:

- Improved food safety.
- Credibility and government recognition.
- One system to qualify auditors that is supported by both public and private sectors and recognized by the international community, with the Canadian opinion heard and considered internationally.
- Different schemes accepted with the capacity for stream-lining, transferability of results from one scheme to another, and flexibility to meet varying market requirements (menu of schemes to choose from depending on your market: domestic/international; cross-commodity).
- Choice of auditing firms and support for small organizations (non-restrictive to users).

³ It is already the case here in Canada that auditors are required to take generic courses as well as sector-specific or commodity-specific courses.

6.3.2 MAIN IMPEDIMENTS OR DRAWBACKS

Participants identified impediments and drawbacks common to all four optional paths. Common challenges identified included:

- A void in leadership to move forward government-industry collaborative efforts (who will take the lead? through what processes?).
- Lack of resources to maintain the current system or to undertake next steps for competency development (either Canadian-specific or adapted to new international standards).
- Limited number of qualified food safety auditors in the existing Canadian pool (which could be further restricted by new requirements) and an on-going challenge of auditor retention.
- Lack of clarity regarding what constitutes the “Canadian” approach and what is meant by “strengthening capacity and infrastructure”.

Main impediments or drawbacks identified by participants that are unique to each option are as follows:

Option A, with comments specific to continuing on Canada’s current track and adopting GFSI’s benchmarking requirements by Canadian schemes:

- Challenges with ensuring auditors are current and calibrated, including who pays for certification along with current lack of practical learning opportunities.
- Stakeholders may not be open-minded to alternative systems.
- Negative perception of government oversight (not seen as credible in some fora), and differences between F/P/T and industry audits.
- Perception that there is a conflict of interest where industry develops and administers schemes (“standard owner”), trains and certifies the auditors who then audit their facilities (“industry auditing themselves”).
- Canada risks being out of synch with the international community by focusing on the Canadian approach.
- GFSI benchmark requirements: GFSI may not accept further schemes in the future.

Option B, where participants identified a number of drawbacks related to Canada monitoring the international scene and strengthening its capacity and infrastructure:

- The monitoring approach is too passive, does not include the Canadian context, and could minimize or exclude Canadian influence at the international level.
- This is the current approach in industry and government and it has not resulted in a clear direction; there are too many variables and there is a lack of consistency.

- There is no formal coordination between government and industry; at this time, government sets the standards and industry implements the standards.
- Monitoring and preparation has different outcomes if done by “Canada” or by individual sectors/agencies; there is no clear definition of who is doing the monitoring and adapting to international standards (government? industry? both?).
- This option risks creating Canada’s standard as the lowest common denominator.

Option C, where comments centered on efforts to identify characteristics specific to Canada in addition to emerging requirements on the international scene:

- Setting something Canadian-specific might not align with trading partners (and vice versa).
- There is a variability in the requirements and expectations of the international markets which adds complexity (e.g., with respect to veterinary drug usage, some drugs are banned in Canada but not by our trading partners).
- Some international standards are not appropriate or relevant to specific commodities.
- Auditors are challenged by doing audits that vary by standard; too many schemes are currently benchmarked by GFSI (currently 9, with more to be added).
- Language i.e. bilingual competency, is a major concern with respect to the capacity to conduct an audit (e.g., with maple syrup industry).
- It could be difficult to achieve buy-in from the public sector.

Option D, where comments focused on the development of a shared/collective Canadian view of competencies to bring into international processes:

- It could be challenging to develop a shared/collection Canadian view because real differences exist between schemes, and there are good reasons for this.
- Achieving agreement could be difficult because of multiple jurisdictions and the need for private and public sector agreement/consensus on competency; the legal mandate of public sector auditors may not match.
- There are a number of unanswered questions related to competency development in Canada, including who the auditor is working for under a shared/collective view, what the drivers are, the location of training, the fact that no tools exist yet and that there is no career track to become an auditor.
- A Canadian approach may be too insular and not applicable at the international level; the time-line for development could fall behind international time-lines, making the input obsolete.

- There is currently no national presence/voice for Canada at the international tables representing private/public discussions; who would this be?

6.3.3 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS OR ESSENTIAL PROCESSES

Participants identified critical success factors or essential processes common to all four optional paths. Common factors identified included:

- Harmonization of existing requirements and/or the identification of core competency requirements that reflect what currently exists and apply to all schemes.
- A process in place to ensure auditors are current and calibrated e.g., effective and efficient education, maybe through academic institutions with industry input, availability of groundwork training for all (processing, inspectors), train-the-trainer capacity, a pathway for an auditor to develop specialized competencies.
- Minimal cost to stakeholders and/or the availability of public funding for implementation.
- A process to identify and agree on adequate roles and responsibilities for decision-making in the Canadian context.
- Continued development of awareness/understanding of the international environment.

Option A, with critical success factors specific to continuing on Canada’s current track and adopting GFSI’s benchmarking requirements by Canadian schemes:

- There is a need to raise awareness and “market” the CFIA national recognition program.
- The same minimum criteria/benchmarked scheme adopted by all; there will be a need to market this approach to stakeholders.
- Consistent definition of terms will be needed to ensure understanding by auditors.
- The current minimum auditor competency in Canada needs to be aligned to global requirements.
- Ensure a market responsive, market-driven approach where primary producers can have a choice of schemes, allowing for high and low risk options and variance in approach for domestic and international markets.⁴
- Good compensation for food safety auditors.

⁴ Note: there was some debate regarding why there would be a difference in competency requirements for domestic vs international markets and what the implications would be for the standard of food safety here in Canada. The issue relates to difference in auditing schemes, record-keeping, frequency of audit and other factors, with the intent to avoid imposing unnecessary costs on farmers. GFSI requirements are a very high bar for small processors.

Option B, where participants identified critical success factors related to Canada monitoring the international scene and strengthening its capacity and infrastructure:

- Consultation, buy-in and political will are needed, as well as clear goals and coordination.
- A process is required that facilitates staying current/adaptive to changes on the national and international scene with respect to competency requirements.
- Short-term training for food safety auditors should be available and immediately applicable.

Option C, where comments focused on efforts to identify characteristics specific to Canada in addition to emerging requirements on the international scene:

- Ensure the process and any new competency requirements:
 - Establish collaboration between public (F/P/T) and private sectors (industry) to develop a common understanding;
 - Maintain auditor independence and avoid conflict of interest;
 - Identify standard requirements by commodity/agri-food, knowing the standard makes it better/easier for auditors to be able to do an effective audit;
 - Provide a pathway to allow auditors in Canada to develop competencies in multiple industry sectors to increase employability and quality of audit practice.
- “Sell” the need/benefit of these international standards to stakeholders in Canada; a cost-benefit analysis could assist in illustrating the benefits of implementation.
- Establish appropriate channels for raising awareness and communicating with stakeholders.
- Demonstrate collaboration, credibility and international recognition.

Option D, where critical success factors were focused on the development of a shared/collective Canadian view of competencies to bring into international processes:

- Develop an effective process for public/private interaction at appropriate levels.
- Identify champions to lead, adopt and promote new competency requirements.
- Ensure that new requirements allow for maintaining/developing the availability of a pool of qualified auditors.

6.4 Plenary Report Back on Options Discussion

The facilitator invited participants to report back on the highlights of their Café discussions. The following key points were shared:

- Participants noted that there were many commonalities across the four options and wondered who would take the lead, who would take ownership and direct it, and who would cover the costs of implementation. They also wondered who would lend credibility to the selected approach so that it would be recognized externally in the international marketplace.
- **Option A** was seen as preferable to Option B because it referenced the existing government food safety recognition programs and offered a perspective on moving forward to adopt new global standards (GFSI).
- **Option B** was seen as too passive and lacking in direction. It was described as the “wait and see” option, with an overemphasis on monitoring the international scene. Participants were unclear about the reference in Option B to adapting and strengthening capacity and infrastructure, and wondered who would be responsible for modifying and adapting our Canadian capacity.
- **Option C** was viewed as more proactive than Options A or B, with the intention of identifying characteristics specific to Canada that need to be integrated into Canadian food safety auditor qualifications and competencies. Participants noted that while it is important to adapt to international standards, the GFSI does not apply to all sectors in the Canadian market, where requirements currently address the regulatory environment. Option C was also seen as presenting a balanced approach, emphasizing cooperation between industry and government.
- **Option D** seemed the most ideal with respect to advancing a shared/collective Canadian view of foods safety auditor qualifications and competencies and actively engaging to bring this view into international processes. However, participants identified this option as the most resource and cost-intensive and did not think it would be realistic to achieve within the time-frame required to have input into international processes that are already underway.
- Participants also commented on:
 - The lack of definition about what is required to make auditing more consistent, although consistency was identified as an ideal outcome for all four options. At this time, interpretations are shifting and it will be important to arrive at an agreement on what is validation, what is training, and what makes a regulatory auditor accountable vs. an industry auditor. A framework is needed to achieve cooperation and transparency.

- The need for a process moving forward that includes full consultation with stakeholders within their own networks and with stakeholders who did not participate in the meeting. This includes clarifying who will lead and own the process and who will represent Canada on the international scene (with the suggestion that it is possible to have multiple voices in different contexts delivering a common message).
- The importance of building on current mechanisms for communicating at the international level to avoid “reinventing the wheel”; these mechanisms could be used to convey common messages and might not require significant investment. For example, there may be Canadian representatives that could bring forward whatever emerges as the recommended direction for Canada.
- The need to identify characteristics of Canadian capacity and infrastructure and how they could be strengthened.
- The importance of overcoming the belief that international standards are demanding and difficult to achieve, which is not necessarily the case. They are not necessarily higher than the standards set in Canada or unachievable by a small producer.

7.0 Identification of Common Ground for Canada’s Path

The facilitator invited participants to select their preferred pathway for moving forward a Canadian approach to food safety auditor qualifications and competencies. Using post-it notes of different colours, each participant indicated their first choice and their second choice for a pathway moving forward. Table 3 presents the results of the activity.

Table 3. Results of Participant Selection of Preferred Option		
Preferred Pathway	First Choice	Second Choice
A	5	5
B	1	4
C	15	5
D	5	7

Overall Option C received the most participant “votes”, and significantly more participants indicated it as their first choice for a preferred pathway.

To move towards common ground, the facilitator invited participants to share the conditions that would need to be in place in order for them to support Option C as the recommended Canadian approach to food safety auditor qualifications and competencies. Participants stated the following conditions:

- More adequately acknowledge the reality of existing programs in Canada and use language that recommends building upon these.
- Once parameters for Canada have been identified, it would be useful to bring these to the international fora as indicated in Option D; however, this is sequential and must follow what is outlined in Option C. With this in mind, the notion of being proactive at the international level could be added to C.
- Define what is meant by Canada, what make the Canadian approach unique,⁵ and who will represent Canada on the international scene; there must be agreement on this before seeking broader validation.

⁵ One participant commented that it is the mechanism of how we approach food safety auditing that makes Canada unique and that represents what we could bring into international fora. For example, the industry-led programs address important issues such as language barriers, a multi-cultural workforce and differing regional contexts. It was suggested that Canada could develop some templates that would be helpful to others, with the value being the mechanism more than the standard itself.

- Recognize that the Canadian context is different; for example, it is important to recognize that different sectors have different markets and that some sectors do not have an international market.
- Add that Canada monitors “and participates” in the international scene.

During the afternoon break period, Mr. Chambers developed a modified Option C based on the above conditions and shared the following revised version with participants for validation:

REVISED OPTION C

Recognizing that Canada currently has a number of initiatives related to food safety auditor qualifications and competency (e.g., the National On-Farm/Post-Farm Recognition Programs Food Safety auditor requirements, CFIA's inspection modernization project, separate provincial government initiatives and Canadian schemes that have adopted GFSI benchmarking requirements)

- X (to be defined) (involving public and private sectors) will:
- Monitor and participate in the international scene (e.g., GFSI, ISO, US FSMA, etc);
- Work with the public and private sectors to identify what characteristics are specific to Canada
- Consider the adaptations required to meet new international and domestic expectations and standards (e.g., competency requirements, assessment approaches and certification options)
- Consider the measures needed to strengthen Canada's capacity and infrastructure
- [Be proactive in participating in international initiatives]

Participants requested the following additional modifications:

- For the fourth bullet, change “consider” to “provide” the adaptations required to meet new international and domestic expectations.
- For the second bullet, flesh out “work with” the public and private sectors to identify what characteristics specific to Canada.
- Do not leave the last bullet (now in brackets) as optional.
- Add a new bullet: “Harmonize initiatives internally in Canada”; this idea is missing.
- Question about 3rd and 4th bullet (adaptations and measures), wondering whether this is intended to take into account the resources needed. Mr. Chambers indicated “yes”, the wording is broad and intended to take resources into account.
- The revised Option C articulates the “what”; the who and the how still need to be addressed.
- Measures need to be defined more clearly; suggested to include “sustainable and justifiable measures”.

- Suggestion to broaden the reference to the CFIA's inspection modernization project to the F/P/T initiatives; perhaps with CFIA inspection modernization project as an example in brackets.

Mr. Chambers will take these suggestions into account, along with the results of the "next steps" exercise, in formulating the final modification of Option C that will be circulated with the project final report.

8.0 Moving Forward: Next Steps to Getting There

Participants discussed the following question in small groups and reported back in plenary:

What priority next steps should be taken over the next 6 – 12 months towards advancing the path that the group has identified to be the compelling one [Option C – Modified] for Canada to take with respect to the qualifications and competencies of both private and public sector food safety auditors?

Annex D includes the detailed notes from the small group discussions. The following is a summary of suggested priority next steps.

Who should take the lead?

The Coalition could lead the next phase of project and seek another round of AAFC funding, drawing in government partners. Alternatives to the Coalition taking the lead could be:

- CFIA Inspection Modernization Project/ OFFS/PFFS Recognition Program;
- Standards Council of Canada or the Canadian General Standards Board (although these bodies may not be able to move forward quickly enough).

The “X” (leader) might vary, depending on the component (e.g., CFIA Food Safety Modernization is the government to government lead).

Who should be involved?

If the Coalition took the lead, one option would be to strike a committee to guide the process.

A committee struck by the Coalition would take about 8 weeks to form and could include the following, in addition to the groups currently involved:

- Government – FPT Food Safety Committee – Request for Participants
- Standards Council of Canada and the Canadian General Standards Board
- Supply Chain associations
- Retail Council of Canada (RCC)
- Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers (CFIG)
- Importers and Exporters Canada (IE Canada)
- Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association (CRFA)

How?

Groups identified complementary approaches to how to move forward Option C – Modified. Some of the general recommendations included:

- Seek out mutual agreement from industry and government to move ahead on Option C as presented and/or revised (pending stakeholder review);
- Secure Industry Boards of Director’s buy-in to the project (commodity groups and industry associations); of all scales geographical and engage them fully in the process;

- Involve FPT governments (CFIA, Health Canada, provincial governments) and Service Providers (e.g., Certification Bodies, Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers)
- Engage more of Canadian retailers, since they tend to drive GFSI;
- Ensure the communications approach reaches out to Trucking, the Packing Association of Canada (PAC), and other government;

The following possible steps were outlined:

Step 1 (April – June 2012)

- Coalition provides/circulates final document/option for validation.
- Resources are needed to move forward, including cash/in-kind/human resources; a budget/plan needs to be drafted and a source of funding identified.

Step 2 (July – December 2012)

- Develop a plan (risk-based, with government observers) that includes core competencies and qualifications.
- The approach to developing the plan could include a consensus-building activity to draft a list of the auditor core competencies. Developing the plan would require gathering international information (comparing various personnel certificate criteria to FS auditor [competency] requirements), identifying players already involved (Codex, ISO, US FSMA) and researching who and which institutions could offer a food safety auditor diploma.
- Appropriate parties need to be involved throughout this process.
- Consider face-to-face meetings to develop a workplan and to identify the criteria to be included in the Consensus document.

Step 3 (January - June 2013)

- Validate draft list through stakeholder feedback (1 – 3 months)
- Assess whether it meets or exceeds international standards
- Final for consensus and approval from all stakeholders (3 months)

One group made specific recommendation that Mr. Chambers, on behalf of the Coalition, continue to participate in international meetings relevant to auditor competency initiatives (e.g., GFSI auditor competence workshop group; ISO; etc).

Another group recommended researching possible models (e.g., Australia) on how and who trains their auditors, as a precursor to determining how and who in Canada would deliver auditor training and/or provide auditor training programs. This research could be started if feasible, but would not be a 6 to 12 month priority.

9.0 Conclusion

Ms. Jackie Crichton, Coalition Co-Chair, thanked participants for taking the time to collaborate and share their ideas for moving forward qualifications and competencies for food safety auditors in Canada. She reviewed next steps, indicating that the workshop report would be circulated in early April for validation by participants, followed by a final project report to be released in June.

Annex A – Workshop Participants

Participants

Susan Abel, FCPC
Janis Arnold, ExcelGrains Canada
Jennifer Bullock, Ontario Veal Association
Albert Chambers, Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition
Erica Charlton, Canadian Poultry & Egg Processors Council
Judy Chong, Canadian Produce Marketing Association
Jackie Crichton, Consultant
James de Valk, FPPAC
Martin Firth, CFIA
Lauren Fox, CFIA
Heather Gale, Canadian Horticultural Council
Grant Hackman, Peak of the Market
Heather Holland, CFIA
Nadean Kennedy, Ontario Ministry of Food and Rural Affairs
John Kukoly, BRC
Macelle Lavergne, Costco Wholesale Canada Ltd
Dawn Lawrence, Canadian Pork Council
Paul Leblanc, Canadian Horticultural Council
Daryl Loback, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Katherine Morissette, AgroExpert (EuroConsultants)
Victor Mulyil, SGS SSC North America
Chris Nash, Egg Farmers of Canada
Rae Payette, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Frank Schreurs, GFTC
Victoria Sikur, Canadian Hatching Egg Producers
Phil Watney, International Food Safety Suppliers Ltd.
Caroline Wilson, Chicken Farmers of Canada

Facilitators

Sue Cass, One World Inc. (Facilitation)
Lynn Chiarelli, One World Inc. (Report)

Annex B - Agenda

CANADIAN SUPPLY CHAIN FOOD SAFETY COALITION 2ND NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON FOOD SAFETY AUDITOR QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

March 13, 2012
Le Salon, National Arts Centre, 53 Elgin Street, Ottawa

Workshop Objectives:

1. To begin to shape a consensus on the direction that Canada could take with respect to the qualifications and competencies of both private sector and public sector food safety auditors
2. To identify steps to reaching that objective, and
3. To scope out the infrastructure needs vis-à-vis this critical component of the food safety system for the coming decades.

Time	Agenda Item
8:00am – 8:30am	Arrivals, Informal Breakfast
8:30am – 9:00am	Welcome, Introductions, Overview of the Day <i>Susan Abel , CSCFSC Co-chair</i> <i>Sue Cass, Facilitator, One World Inc.</i>
9:00am – 10:00am	Highlights of What is Happening on the World Stage Regarding Food Safety Qualifications and Competencies <i>Albert Chambers, Executive Director, Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation and Question / Answer Period
10:00am – 10:15am	<i>Break</i>
10:15am – 12:30 pm	Exploring Some Optional Paths for Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rotational small group café discussions
12:30pm – 1:15pm	<i>Lunch</i>
1:15pm – 2:15pm	Identification of Common Ground for Canada's Path <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plenary• Consensus building activity
2:15pm – 2:30pm	<i>Break</i>
2:30pm – 3:50pm	Moving Forward – Next Steps to Getting there <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small group discussions• Plenary
3:50pm – 4:00pm	Wrap up and Evaluation
4:00pm	Departures

Annex C – Café Discussion Notes on Options

IDEAL END OUTCOME	MAIN IMPEDIMENTS/DRAWBACKS	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS/PROCESSES
Option A		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency of auditor competency (3rd party/industry and government) • May require some groups to evolve to this • Credible systems in place – regardless of type of oversight • Cooperative processes – should not be one against another • Recognition of work done to date – CFIA FSRP built with industry reflects Canadian reality • Allows sectors to remain flexible • Government oversees private sector programs and formally recognized them • Most consistent reduction of risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of government inspection • Ensuring auditors are current and calibrated – including who pays – inconsistent audits are also expensive • Being open-minded re: alternative systems • Ongoing funding to maintain current system • GFSI benchmark requirements and acceptance of further schemes may not be allowed • Lack of practical learning opportunities • Difference between F/P/T and industry audits • Out of synch with international community • Maintain corporate memory of existing work to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to market this approach • Process that ensure auditors are current and calibrated – includes bodies that do this • Consistent definition of terms between groups • Current minimum auditor competency needs to be aligned to global requirements • The same minimum criteria/benchmarked scheme adopted by all • Harmonization of existing requirements • Good compensation • Public funding for training

IDEAL END OUTCOME	MAIN IMPEDIMENTS/DRAWBACKS	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS/PROCESSES
Option B		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with international expectations • Effort is being done by others – maybe best to wait for input • Strengthened capacity and infrastructure • Consistency, adaptability, credibility • Enhance and protect Canada’s international market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too passive • Monitoring may not give enough influence – must accept others lead • No Canadian context • Monitoring and preparation has different outcomes if done by “Canada” or by individual sectors/agencies. Who is doing the monitoring and adapting? • Perspective of monitoring: govt/industry/both? • Capacity – people and money • Minimizes or excludes Canadian influences • Strengthening capacity and infrastructure – not defined • Too many variables and lack of consistency at this point • Need industry input • This is happening currently in industry and government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing possibility for groundwork training for all – processing, inspectors • Need strong – TRAIN THE TRAINERS • Effective and efficient education (maybe through academic institutions) Industry input is critical • Harmonization/clear goals – coordination • Minimal cost • Short-term training that is immediately applicable • Ability to stay current/adaptive • Consultation and buy-in • Identification of core/base requirements that apply to all schemes • Who pays for all this? • Political will

IDEAL END OUTCOME	MAIN IMPEDIMENTS/DRAWBACKS	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS/PROCESSES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hasn't resulted in a clear direction • Not having enough auditors – training, maintaining body of auditors • No formal coordination between government and industry – govt set standard; industry implement standard • Lack of funds to monitor/participate • Risk of this option creating Canada's standard as the lowest common denominator 	

IDEAL END OUTCOME	MAIN IMPEDIMENTS/DRAWBACKS	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS/PROCESSES
Option C		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonized core competency criteria between countries. • Assigned independent entity to manage the Canadian characteristics for Food Safety auditor qualifications and competencies • Cost-efficient, credible system, stays current • Access to international markets • Avoidance of litigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting something Canadian-specific that might not align with trading partners (and vice versa) • Auditor availability (lack of specialist) • Lack of the necessary leadership roles. • Communication/awareness • How do we sell the concept to public service members? • Variability in requirements and expectations on the international markets (drug usage – some drugs are banned in Canada but allowed for trading partners) • Auditors challenged by doing audits that vary by standard • Language is a major concern with being able to do an audit (i.e. Maple Syrup) • Appropriateness of an international standard is not relevant to specific commodities • There is no respect to purpose of GFSI by GFSI stakeholders (some standards preferred); too many schemes benchmarked (currently 9 and 14 more) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A core competency that reflects what exists • A pathway for an auditor to develop specialized competencies • Continue awareness/understanding of international environment • Identify and agree on adequate roles and responsibilities for decision-making in the Canadian context • Appropriate communication/awareness. Language • Maintain auditor independence and avoidance of conflict of interest. • Identify standard requirements by commodity/Agri-good (knowing standard – makes it better/easier for auditors to be able to do an effective audit) • Selling the need/benefit of these international standards • Cost benefit analysis provides proof of implementing. Will be a benefit.

IDEAL END OUTCOME	MAIN IMPEDIMENTS/DRAWBACKS	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS/PROCESSES
Option D		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credibility • Government recognition • Weed-out independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Domestic and international ○ Cross-commodity ○ Consistency (across schemes) ○ Streamlining • Improved food safety • Support for small organizations – non-restrictive to users • Transferability of results from 1 scheme to another • Different schemes accepted with flexibility to meet varying market requirements (menu of schemes to choose from depending on your market) • Choice of auditing firms • One system to qualify auditors that is supported by both public and private sectors; recognized by international community • Canadian opinion is heard and considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real differences exist between schemes, for good reason • Multiple jurisdictions • Cost • High amount of training required/low amount of annual audit demand for that trained PERSONAL Private and public sector agreement needed • No career track to become an auditor • Location of training • Who is the auditor working for? What are the drivers? • Ability to apply a Canadian approach to international • International presence/voice at the table in private/public discussions • Too insular from the world • More competency needed; qualifications less so • Impediment is consensus on competency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/private interaction at effective level • Consistency • Funding • Availability of training • Availability of qualified auditors • Champions to lead, adopt, promote • Collaborative credible, internationally recognized

IDEAL END OUTCOME	MAIN IMPEDIMENTS/DRAWBACKS	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS/PROCESSES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tools exist yet • Legal mandate of public sector auditors maybe does not match • Timeline involving public/private development may fall behind international timelines • What is a “Canadian view” 	

Annex D – Small Group Notes on Moving Forward: Next Steps to Getting There

Priority next steps that our group recommends to be taken over the next 6-12 months towards advancing this path are:

Heather Gale Group

Who? X could be:

1. Coalition could lead the next phase of project – seek another round of AAFC funding – draw in government partners.
2. CFIA Inspection Modernization Project/ OFFS/PFFS Recognition Program
3. SCC – too slow?/CGSB? – too slow

How?

1. Continued (Albert) participation in international meetings relevant to auditor competency initiatives (e.g., GFSI auditor competence workshop group; ISO; etc)
2. Comparing various personnel certificate criteria to FS auditor [competency] requirements (these need to be researched and summarized first)
3. Draft core competencies/research who and which institutions could offer FS auditor diploma

Lauren Fox Group

Step 1 (April – June 2012)

- Coalition provides/circulates final document/option for validation

Step 2 (July – December 2012)

- Consensus-building activity to draft a list of the auditor competency.
- Appropriate parties need to be involved.

Step 3 (January - June 2012)

- Validate draft list - does it meet or exceed international standards?
- Approval from all stakeholders

Daryl Labach group

1. Industry Boards of Director's buy-in to the project (commodity groups and industry associations); of all scales geographical

2. Invite parties who need to be part of the discussion/development of this path (Standards Council of Canada, FPT governments, Industry (associations and commodity groups), service provider)

- FPT governments – CFIA, Health Canada, provincial governments
- Service providers – Certification Bodies, Canadian Federation of Independent

3. Face-to-face meetings to develop a workplan, identify the criteria to be included in the Consensus document

Susan Abel Group

1. Strike a Committee (8 weeks to form – CSCFSC to take lead)

- Government – FPT Food Safety Committee – Request for Participants
- SCC and CGSB
- Supply Chain (CSCFSC)
- RCC
- CFGI
- IE Canada
- CFRA

Ensure communications approach reaches out to Trucking/PAC etc/Other Government

2. Funding

- Resources to develop standards
- Cash/in-kind/human resources
- Needs a budget/plan
- Source funding

3. Developing Plan – Risk-Based (4 months; with government observers)

- Core competencies and qualifications
- Gather international information
- ID players already involved (Codes, ISO, US FSMA)

4. Stakeholder Feedback (1 – 3 months)

5. Final for Consensus (3 months)

Erica Charlton Group

Gage response from broader audience (industry and public sector); need to know there is support for this option.

- Who is missing?
- Engage more of Canadian retailers, since they tend to drive GFSI
- Industry and government needs to come together and agree they have a mutual agreement to move ahead on Option C as presented and/or revised (pending stakeholder review).
- Standards Council of Canada should be engaged

The “X” (leader) varies, depending on the component (e.g., Food Safety Modernization is government to government).

Research possible models (e.g., Australia) on how and who trains their auditors, as a precursor to determining how and who in Canada would deliver auditor training and/or provide auditor training programs. This research can be started if feasible, but not a 6 to 12 month priority).