

BRCGS Annual Business Report

April 2023 - March 2024



BRCGS



Welcome to the
**BRCGS Annual
Business Report
2023-24**

Contents

Director's welcome	3
Our purpose, why we exist	4
International Advisory Board report	5
2023-24 at a glance	6
Our Certification Integrity Programme	7
Integrity audits programme 2023-24 summary	8
Certification Programmes report	9
Technical updates	10
Top non-conformities of 2023-24	11
Setting the Standards	13
Celebrating success in the industry	15
BRCGS digital solutions	17
Monitoring product recalls	18
Our delivery partners	20
Our auditors	21
BRCGS Academy	22
Delivering world-renowned expertise straight to your business	23
Looking ahead to 2024	24

Director's welcome

Welcome to the BRCGS Annual Business Report.

BRCGS was founded in 1996 and is a world-leading brand that helps build confidence in the food and beverage supply chain. BRCGS Standards are used by over 35,000 certificated sites in more than 130 countries around the world and have played a significant role in assisting food manufacturers in the production of safe food for the past 25 years.

Our Standards for Food Safety, Packaging Materials, Storage and Distribution, Consumer Products, Agents and Brokers, Retail, Gluten Free, Plant-Based, START! and Ethical Trading and Responsible Sourcing set the benchmark for good manufacturing practice and help provide assurance to customers that products are safe, legal and of high quality.

BRCGS has a strong reputation for technical excellence, and is continually driving improved performance to meet stakeholder demands, user needs and ultimately consumer safety. The heart of our activity is the development of our certification programmes. For a Standard to be effective, it is not enough to only define a set of requirements. We also need a protocol, report mechanisms, non-conformity classification guidance, auditor competency rules, training materials, supporting interpretation guidance...all this makes up the certification programme. This year we have reflected this in the creation of our new Programmes Team, who are working with industry representatives to deliver 'the full package' for each of our programmes.

Another significant development is the change from 'Compliance' to 'Certification Integrity'. This is a crucial way in which we promote trust in the activities of our certification body partners, who are active on the ground conducting audits to our

Standards. Certification Integrity is not just a name change; it is a change in ethos. It aims to reflect not just what we do, but what we achieve by doing it.

Throughout the last year we have embraced the opportunity to work with other brands across our parent organisation, LGC, as we work to deliver 'Science for a Safer World'. This includes Safefood 360, a food safety and supplier quality software provider that delivers solutions tailored to GFSI benchmarked standards, and Informed, that provides quality assurance programmes for food supplements and sports nutrition products.

We also work in partnership with the Food Authenticity Network to support the industry in tackling challenges associated with food fraud prevention and detection. Through collaboration with our sister companies, we aim to support our customers and stakeholders with BRCGS compliance and continuous improvement to improve the resilience of global food supply chains.

We continue to face significant challenges in global food trade and food security; geopolitical uncertainty and the threats associated with climate change require us to be agile in the development of our programmes to protect food safety and minimise risks to the consumer. As always, we remain committed to the highest level of technical competence and depend on the expertise and support of our industry colleagues and delivery partners, without whom this would not be possible.



Amanda McCarthy
Business Director, BRCGS



Our purpose, why we exist

Our Mission is to be the leading global assurance scheme owner in the food and allied industries space, as measured by market feedback and certificate numbers. We will provide technically-robust certification programmes and innovate our supporting services to meet the needs of our delivery partners. Whilst optimising our offer for existing customers in existing markets, we will also focus on emerging markets for the benefit of global supply chains.

Our values, how we work

PASSION

Pride in our achievements engenders passion for our work.

CURIOSITY

We constantly look forward to what's next: our curiosity for today's discoveries makes tomorrow's innovations possible.

INTEGRITY

A commitment to high ethical standards.

BRILLIANCE

We strive to be the best in everything we say and do, in order to exceed expectations.

RESPECT

We respect gender, age, nationality, religion and individuality – our diversity is our strength.

Our approach, how we will succeed

- Stay aligned to the needs of our stakeholders.
- Prioritise certification integrity throughout the delivery of our programmes.
- Be open to collaboration with industry partners for the wider benefit of food and product safety for the consumer.
- Develop smart tools and services to facilitate audit delivery and overcome audit challenges.
- Encourage transparency to enhance risk mitigation and identification of potential vulnerabilities in the supply chain, whilst ensuring confidential data is protected.
- Contribute to global initiatives in supply chain management, within the scope of our expertise.
- Be a supportive source of advice and innovation, known for our technical excellence.

Our strategic pillars, our focus to achieve our vision

Stakeholder Engagement

To develop strong relationships with industry stakeholders to understand their needs.

Customer Led

To be a customer-led, but service driven business delivering customer value to meet supply chain challenges.

Innovation

To be thought and solution leaders in the food and consumer products industry, through creative and structured innovation

Brand

To transform from a standards maker, to a strategic partner with a wider connected series of assurance solutions to protect consumers and brands alike.

Future of Assurance

To align the BRCGS offer with changing industry risks and needs such as supply chain complexities, regulatory developments, climate change, and declining auditor pool.

Our opportunity, where we focus for growth



Value added functionality of the BRCGS Directory



Innovation to facilitate audit integrity



New sites in emerging markets



Beyond compliance to provide more performance related supplier insight

International Advisory Board report

I am delighted to provide you with a short review of the activity of the BRCGS International Advisory Board (IAB) during 2023-24. The IAB is an integral part of the BRCGS governance process. It has a dual role - providing oversight of governance and performance whilst providing insight that ensures the BRCGS strategy remains relevant to the needs of the industry.

There are currently two active IAB committees covering the Americas and Europe, with a relaunch of the third committee in the Asia Pacific region in the pipeline. The IAB committees involve senior representatives from retail, manufacture and food service companies that have global operations and supply chains using the BRCGS Standards. You can find out more about the roles, responsibilities and members of the IAB together with the broader approach to governance on the BRCGS website.

I would like express my sincere gratitude to the previous Chair, Dr Geoff Spriegel for his expert and professional chairmanship of the IAB over the previous 10 years. Geoff provided unparalleled support to BRCGS by galvanizing groups of expert, industry professionals over the years to support the goal of improving standards in the industry.

This was my first full year as Chair and it provided an opportunity to reshape the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the IAB. The IAB now has a greater focus on governance and this features at every IAB meeting. The TOR also clarified the role of the IAB in providing strategic insight into the development of BRCGS Standards to ensure they focus on the strategic needs of the industry. We do so recognising the role of Technical Advisory Committees and Working Groups in providing specific technical insight.

Specific areas of focus addressed by the IAB over the year included the Certification Integrity Programme, Standards development, information sharing and food fraud. In addition to regular scheduled meetings, the IAB has also been convened under extraordinary circumstances where industry events required our input into a BRCGS response.

Some examples of items considered by the IAB in 2023:

Integrity reporting: This is a standing agenda item for the IAB and provides insight into the overall management of BRCGS certification programmes. This includes certification body management e.g. approved, new and sanctioned certification bodies, key performance indicators and trends for certification bodies, integrity visits, complaints, recalls, accreditation/benchmarking status (IAF/GFSI/SSCI, etc.). The IAB's role in providing independent scrutiny of the BRCGS governance and integrity programmes is key to building trust in BRCGS Standards amongst users and wider stakeholders.

Standards development: The IAB's role in reviewing BRCGS Standards has been redefined and, over the course of the year, the Board has considered the schedule of reviews. In future plans for new issues of Standards, the IAB will provide input into the strategic needs of the industry. This will be combined with insight from other stakeholder groups and used by the Technical Advisory Committees and Working Groups when developing new Standards or revised versions of existing Standards.

Food fraud: The incident of beef labelling fraud in the UK during 2023 prompted a variety of actions by BRCGS to review the integrity of its certification programmes and this included extensive engagement with the IAB. The IAB has been supportive of BRCGS actions to participate in the UK Food Standards Agency industry initiatives, including the development of tools and training to assist auditors in the identification of food fraud.

I would like to thank the members of the BRCGS IAB for their valued contribution to the many topics we have covered in our meetings during the year. This has allowed us to provide critical, independent scrutiny of governance and expert insight into strategy for BRCGS that ultimately improves BRCGS certification for the many thousands of businesses who rely on it throughout the world.



Alec Kyriakides
IAB Chair
BRCGS International Advisory Board

2023-24 at a glance

35,000+
audits completed against
BRCGS Standards.

Certificated sites in
131 countries.

15,700+
unannounced audits.

50%
of BRCGS Food Safety
audits completed as
unannounced.

230,000
corrective actions raised.

1,442
product incidents followed
up by the certification
bodies.

2,507
auditors delivering BRCGS
audits globally.

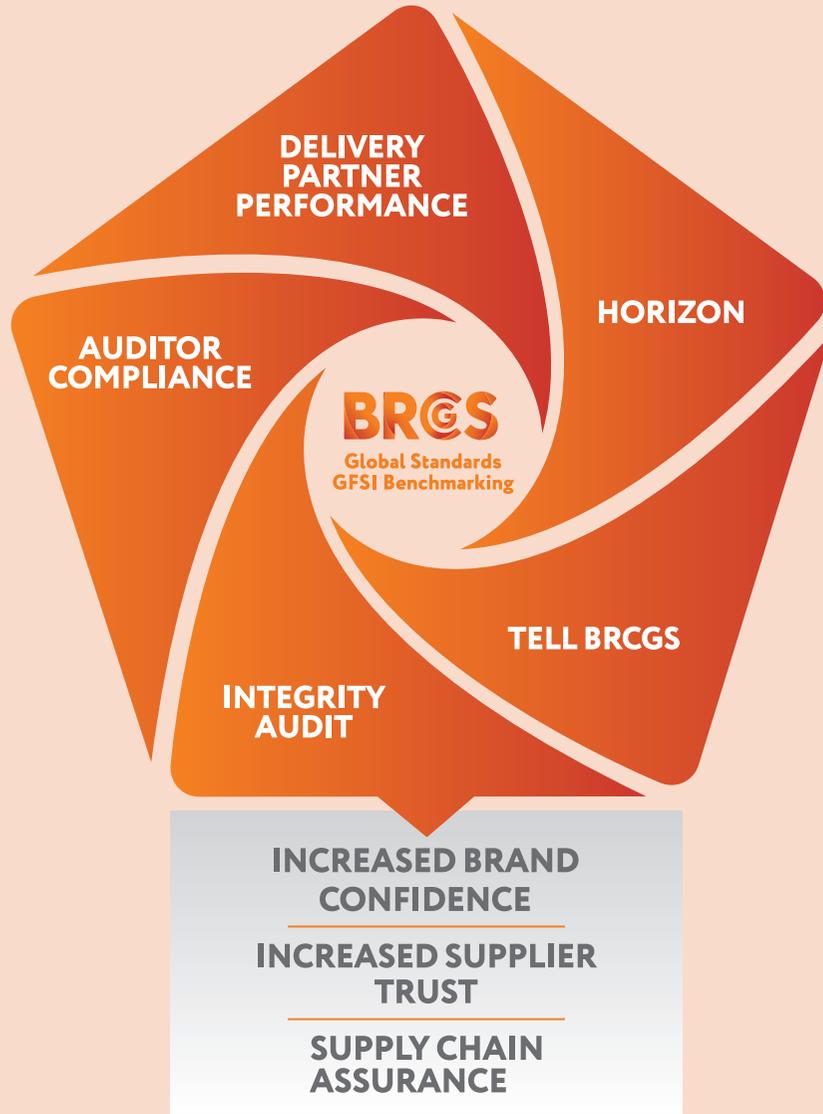
94%
of sites rated the overall
performance of BRCGS as
Very Good and Excellent.

20,483
delegates attended BRCGS
training courses across 68
countries.

14,348
enrolled in BRCGS
Professional Programme.

678
BRCGS Professional
graduates.

✓ Our integrity programme is comprised of five layers:



Our Certification Integrity Programme

Integrity forms the cornerstone of certification, which is why BRCGS pioneered its Compliance Programme sixteen years ago. In this time the programme has developed significantly and we are very proud of the widely recognised and robust programme that we have embedded throughout our business.

To align with our values and to better reflect the hard work that the team does, the Compliance Programme has now become Certification Integrity. This future-proofs this vital area of the business to ensure it continues to add value and provide confidence in BRCGS certification as the industry evolves.

At BRCGS we're committed to preserving our reputation as the leading global brand protection organisation. We implement rigorous practices that aim to make sure an audit is carried out in exactly the same way, regardless of the product, country of production, certification body or auditor. This ensures the integrity and consistency of the BRCGS certification scheme, no matter where in the world your supplier is located. Integrity is the bedrock of BRCGS certification. It is fundamental in delivering results that brand owners can trust. As supply chains globalise more and more, integrity is key to ensuring BRCGS certification continues to play a vital role in consumer protection. We do this by using an integrity programme comprised of five layers.

Integrity audits programme

To gain insight into how well our scheme is operating in the global marketplace, BRCGS invests a significant amount each year in carrying out visits to certificated sites. This involves a one-day site review of previously audited sites to assess the auditor's findings and the site's maintenance of standards. BRCGS has increased its investment in this area year on year and has a growing team of independent auditors making up our global team. Respected throughout the industry, our auditors ensure that BRCGS protocols are consistently maintained and followed throughout the supply chain.

Integrity audits programme 2023-24 summary

In 2023, we completed 223 integrity visits in 33 countries covering a range of BRCGS Standards, with 13% of the visits completed remotely.

The work of 200+ auditors was assessed during these visits with 86% of our approved certification bodies covered by this activity. These visits are routinely scheduled either on a risk basis, following analysis of the extensive volume of audit data held by BRCGS, or as a result of negative feedback received through our confidential reporting system, TellBRCGS.

Integrity visits – factors considered in risk assessment

Category	Factors
Certification bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of partners Geography Performance Integrity issues and complaints Trends outside the norm
Auditors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low number of non-conformities Non-conformity trends outside the norm Complaints Issues with report writing Volume of audits Movement around Certification bodies
Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit type Geography Repeated product recalls Complaints Changing certification bodies Consecutive audits by same auditor



Mandatory unannounced audits

Unannounced audits provide companies with an opportunity to:

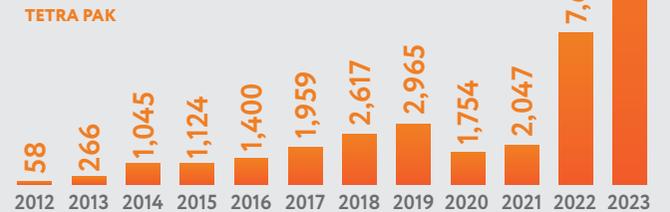
- Demonstrate confidence in their systems and procedures, to the extent that they can be subjected to unannounced scrutiny.
- Adopt an audit-ready product safety culture.
- Improve customer confidence, by providing their customers with an independent unannounced review of systems and procedures that demonstrates they are maintaining their systems in good order.

As a result of the added confidence provided by unannounced audits, the GFSI Benchmark Version 2020 introduced a new requirement for certificated sites to have at least one unannounced audit every three years i.e. sites certificated before 2022 must have at least one unannounced audit during 2022 – 2024 audit cycle. This requirement applies to any sites certificated against the BRCGS Global Standards Food Safety, Packaging Materials, and Storage and Distribution.

2023 was the second year of the 3-year cycle and almost 16,000 sites had an unannounced audit with 67% of sites already complying with the mandatory unannounced audit requirement. Overall, more than 50% of sites audited against BRCGS Global Standard Food Safety in 2023 underwent an unannounced audit.

Unannounced audits in numbers

“Passing an unannounced audit by the highly professional auditors of BRCGS without any non-conformity provides strong reassurance to our customers as well as retailers and consumers.”



Certification Programmes report



Angela O'Donovan
Head of Programmes BRCGS

The BRCGS Standards team had a very busy year and I am extremely proud of their commitment and hard work to deliver new Standards that will make the world a safer place.

Over the year we updated and launched several Standards, enhanced our ways of working and restructured the team to ensure it aligned and continues to support business needs. Ultimately our goal is to deliver the best Standards for all producers in the food and non-food supply chains to enable them to deliver the safest products that are legally and specification compliant, to their customers. We do this by listening to the voice of our customers and stakeholders, and updating the Standards accordingly to ensure they are current, relevant, address changes in technology, consider geo-political situations, legislation, GFSI updates, and other sector intelligence.

It was an exciting year for us because audits to Global Standard Food Safety (Issue 9) went live in February 2023, and since then over 23,000 sites have been certificated to the new issue. Approximately 50% of these have been unannounced audits and over 100,000 non-conformities have been identified and corrected, demonstrating that the audit approach really does help sites continually improve their food safety management systems. The Food Safety Technical Advisory Committee recommended in

September, as is typical six months after audits go live to a new Standard, with a successful and productive meeting.

We also published Global Standard START! (Issue 2) in March 2023 and audits commenced in September 2023. START! was developed to complement Global Standard Food Safety and enables sites to be certificated against two levels of requirements: Basic and Intermediate. Each level provides recognised stepping stones towards eventual certification to the full Food Standard (if required). This Standard targets small and less mature manufacturing and processing sites to begin their certification journey and that is why this year we created and published for the first time an Interpretation Guideline specifically for Issue 2. In addition, the self-assessment checklist tool has been translated in several languages including Chinese, Brazilian, Portuguese, French, Spanish, Turkish and Indonesian. We are very keen to hear your feedback about this new document.

I am delighted the role of our International Advisory Board in the review of BRCGS Standards has been redefined so that they will provide input into the strategic needs of the industry to guide future versions of each Standard. This is in addition to the robust process already in place which involves stakeholders from across different industry sectors, different geographies, different sized sites, different technical expertise and so on.

The final change is that a new team structure was introduced in 2023. BRCGS had operated with the same model since its first Standard, and this approach was no longer fit-for-purpose. The new Programmes Team (note 'Programmes', not 'Standards', as our products and services are so much more than just 'Standards') means we are well equipped to continue to deliver our Standards and Programmes going forward.



BRCGS guidance document updates

In 2023 we updated several of the guidance documents relevant to BRCGS Standards.

- Category Guideline for Fresh Produce
- Category Guideline for Alcoholic Drinks: Wine
- Effective Environmental Monitoring
- Understanding Production Risk Zones
- Understanding Root Cause Analysis
- Guide to Lighting Best Practice
- Additional Module 10 Global G.A.P Chain of Custody

All our guidelines are available on the BRCGS Store or Participate.

Technical updates

Global Standard Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing Launch of Issue 2.1

BRCGS enhanced the Global Standard Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing to better suit the market by changing the direction of the independent accreditation process from ISO 17021 to ISO 17065. We also used it as an opportunity to update the audit protocol, expand the audit options to include a two-part blended approach, remove the fundamental requirements because surveillance audits are no longer part of the protocol, update the tools for self-assessment, and provide additional clarity where needed. This was published as version 2.1 in May 2023. An Interpretation Guideline was also published to support sites and auditors with these updates.

Global Standard Gluten-Free Launch of Issue 4

The rewrite of Global Standard Gluten-Free for Issue 4 started in spring 2023 with a wide-ranging Technical Working Group from across the globe. The new Standard was launched in early 2024 along with the Interpretation Guideline and Summary of Key Changes. The Standard is recognised and accepted as equivalent to the audit requirements of several coeliac associations including ACELMEX in Mexico and Latin America, Canadian Celiac Association, and Beyond Celiac in the USA. The new issue includes a voluntary section of additional requirements specifically for the use of the AOECs (Association of European Coeliac Societies) Crossed Grain Trademark.

Global Standard Packaging Materials Issue 7 Revision

The Packaging Materials Issue 7 rewrite project started in late 2023. The Technical Working Group consists of 35 members representing certification bodies, accreditation bodies, trade associations, technical experts, retailers, specifiers, manufacturers, approved training partners, and auditors from across the globe. Issue 7 is due to be published in October 2024 and audits will go live April 2025.

Global Standard Storage and Distribution

Issue 4 was officially reviewed in September 2023 by the Technical Advisory Committee. They concluded the Standard currently met the needs of the industry and did not warrant a rewrite at this time.

Global Standard Consumer Products

The Consumer Products TAC held its first meeting since 2021. The virtual meeting was well attended, and good progress was made on industry topics relevant to the Standard. These will continue on a 6-month cycle going forward.

Other updates

Updates were made to all Standards relating to various topics including unannounced audit protocols. Each update was approved by the relevant TAC, published as position statements on the BRCGS website and communicated via the usual channels at the time.

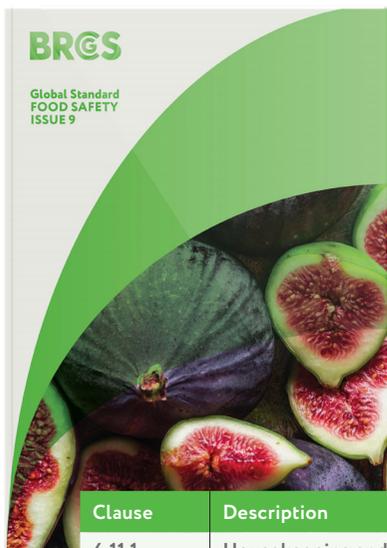
New team structure

A new team structure was introduced in the technical area of the business in 2023. The purpose was to build a team more able to respond to industry challenges and compete with the market and providing opportunities for career development and progression. It also allows the introduction of additional technical expertise, more effective team workloads and flexible resource to enable new products and services to be developed.

The new Programmes Team comprises of a 'food team' and a 'non-food team' and each team is managed by a Programme Manager, who reports to the Head of Programmes. The Programme Manager will engage with the industry, and with our specifiers, to develop the programmes required by each changing industry, and be engaged with industry challenges such as changes in legislation, food fraud and auditor scarcity. They manage the Technical Managers/Technical Consultants so that resource can be focused where it is needed. This gives us the opportunity to exploit new opportunities when they arise.

“Ultimately our goal is to deliver the best Standards for all producers in the food and non-food supply chains.”

Top non-conformities of 2023-24



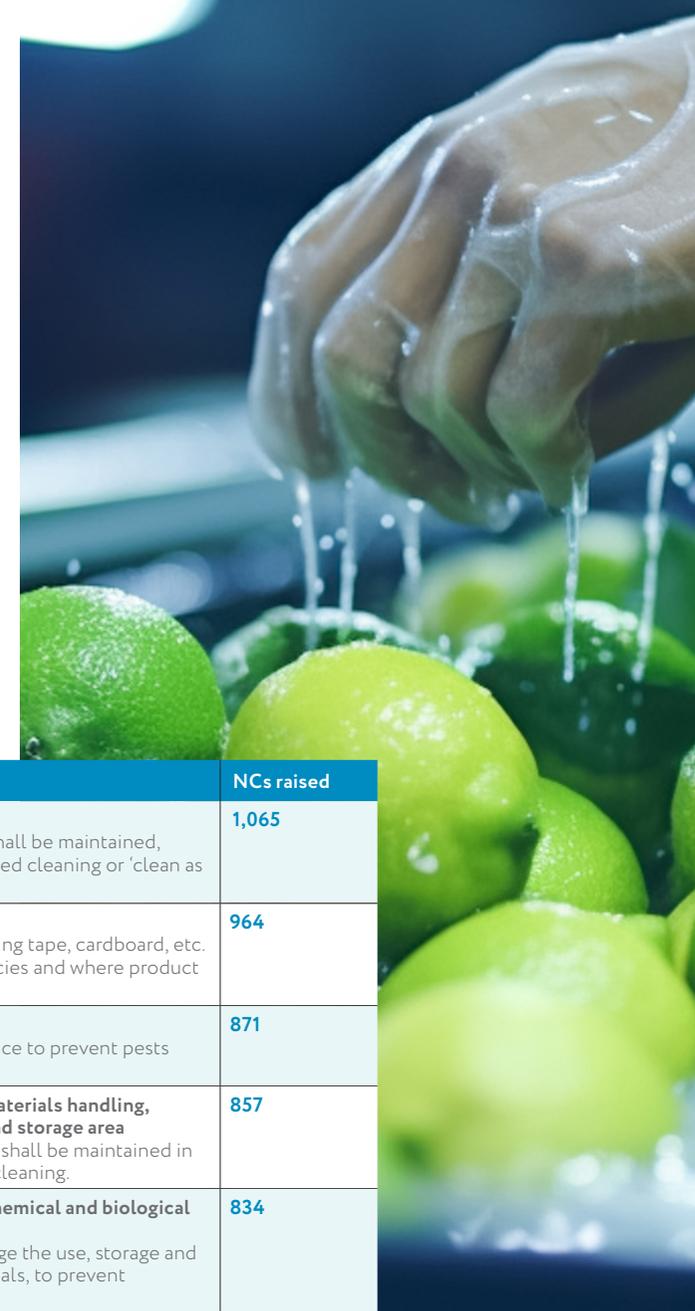
“Having this certification gives us access to major global customers, markets, and retailers. Additionally, it adds value to our products by meeting a globally recognised standard and improves the efficiency of our quality and food safety management system.”

Minerva Foods, South America

Clause	Description	NCs raised
4.11.1	Housekeeping and hygiene The premises and equipment shall be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.	4,816
4.9.1.1	Chemical and physical product contamination control: raw material-handling, preparation, processing, packing and storage areas Processes shall be in place to manage the use, storage and handling of non-food chemicals to prevent chemical contamination.	3,758
4.4.8	Building fabric, raw material-handling, preparation, processing, packing and storage areas Doors (both internal and external) shall be maintained in good condition.	3,110
4.6.2	Equipment The design and construction of equipment shall be based on risk, to prevent product contamination.	3,090
4.4.1	Equipment Walls shall be finished and maintained to prevent the accumulation of dirt, minimise condensation and mould growth, and facilitate cleaning.	2,915



Clause	Description	NCs raised
4.8.1	Housekeeping and cleaning Good standards of housekeeping shall be maintained, which shall include a condition-based cleaning or 'clean as you go' policy.	1,065
4.7.6	Maintenance Temporary repairs/modifications using tape, cardboard, etc. shall only be permitted in emergencies and where product contamination is not at risk.	964
4.11.5	Pest management Effective precautions shall be in place to prevent pests entering the premises.	871
4.2.1	Building fabric and interiors: raw materials handling, preparation, processing, packing and storage area Walls, floors, ceilings and pipework shall be maintained in good condition and shall facilitate cleaning.	857
4.9.3.1	Product contamination control - Chemical and biological control Processes shall be in place to manage the use, storage and handling of non-production chemicals, to prevent chemical contamination.	834





“The BRCGS standard was chosen as a ‘worldwide’ passport for food safety and high site standards. The flexibility of the bolt on modules allows us to demonstrate competency in a wide range of food manufacturing principles.”

Symington’s, UK

Clause	Description	NCs raised
4.4.9	Fabrication – product intake, handling, storage and dispatch areas Buildings shall be suitably proofed against the entry of all pests.	359
6.4.1	Housekeeping and hygiene The premises and equipment shall be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.	359
7.4.3	Physical and chemical product contamination risk Processes shall be in place to manage the use, storage and handling of chemicals to prevent chemical contamination.	254
4.4.1	Fabrication – product intake, handling, storage and dispatch areas Walls, floors, ceilings and pipe work shall be maintained in good condition and shall be capable of being kept clean.	251
3.2.1	Internal audits There shall be a scheduled programme of internal audits.	242



Clause	Description	NCs raised
3.5.1	Product safety and quality management system There shall be a scheduled programme of internal audits.	101
2.5	Hazard and risk assessment A process flow diagram shall be prepared to cover each step in the process from the purchase or acceptance of responsibility for products to acceptance of the products by the company’s customer.	100
1.1.2	Senior management commitment Effective precautions shall be in place to prevent pests entering the premises.	99
2.6	Hazard and risk assessment The company shall identify and record all potential hazards associated with each step of the product flow.	82
4.1.2	Supplier and subcontracted service management The process for the initial and ongoing approval of manufacturers of products shall be based on risk.	70

“Achieving BRCGS START! meant we could transition to a globally recognised standard. We aim to work towards full BRCGS Food Safety certification, but we understand that getting there is going to be a multistage process and we love that we can take incremental steps.”

Piglets Pantry, UK

Setting the Standards

Covering core issue areas and certification themes vital to the success of modern business, our Standards contain prescriptive, clear and compelling information, giving manufacturing sites everything they need to drive up quality and achieve certification. Underpinned by a robust Certification Integrity programme and a rigorous grading system, they are designed to help organisations deliver meaningful improvements over time.

Food Safety

Developed by food industry experts to ensure it is rigorous and detailed, yet easy to understand, the latest issue of our Global Standard Food Safety provides a framework for managing product safety, integrity, legality and quality in the food and food ingredient manufacturing, processing and packing industry.

Agents and Brokers

The Global Standard Agents and Brokers has been developed to provide a framework for managing product safety, quality and legality for non-manufacturing businesses in the food and packaging industries. It covers issues as diverse as senior management commitment and continual improvement, and hazard and risk assessment.

Storage and Distribution

The Global Standard Storage and Distribution provides the essential certification link between our range of manufacturing Standards and end users such as retailers or food service companies. It ensures that product integrity is maintained during storage and distribution, and that customer confidence is maximised through audit and certification.

Consumer Products

The Global Standard Consumer Products covers two distinct areas: General Merchandise, and Personal Care and Household, and provides a clear framework that helps manufacturers to produce safe, quality and legal products that meet customer requirements.

Packaging Materials

The Global Standard Packaging Materials was the first packaging standard in the world to be recognised by the GFSI benchmarking committee. It can be used by any manufacturer producing packaging materials for all types of products at all levels. The Standard provides a robust framework for manufacturers to assist them in the production of safe, authentic packaging materials and to better manage product quality to meet customers' requirements, while maintaining legal compliance.

Retail

The Global Standard Retail provides essential certification for retailers of food products and hard lines and covers the activity of retailing, as well as commissary, sourcing and in-store production. It is designed to promote best practice in product safety, quality, compliance and consumer protection.

Gluten-Free

The Global Standard Gluten-Free is based on a preventative, science-based approach for managing the safe manufacturing and production of gluten-free products. It certifies a business, facility, and its gluten-free manufacturing controls and promotes the preventative controls as outlined within HACCP

Global Standards for a safer world.





principles, the Food Safety Modernization Act and the Safe Food for Canadians Act. Through partnerships with leading coeliac organisations, Global Standard Gluten-Free allows brand owners to connect globally with the broader and still growing, gluten-free consumer market.

Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing

The Global Standard Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing provides a formal framework for an independent evaluation of the management system of an organisation and its capability and capacity to deliver against the principles of ethical trade and responsible sourcing. It enables suppliers to identify risks within their organisation and their supply chain and to demonstrate that the goods and/or services that they sell are produced ethically and that raw materials are sourced responsibly.

Plant-Based

The Global Standard Plant-Based was developed in response to a shift in consumer behaviour, and offers greater certainty to both industry and consumers. Taking a comprehensive management system approach, the Standard provides a manufacturing framework for the production of plant-based food, including operational criteria, to ensure that plant-based products are free of material of animal origin. It provides a high level of protection from failure and enables the rapid identification and management of risks and deviations. The plant-based on-pack trademark empowers consumers to make more informed choices quickly and easily, and provides powerful differentiation for brands and products.

START!

The START! programme was developed to complement the BRCGS Global Standard Food Safety. It recognises and encourages the development of food safety systems in small sites where the full Standard may not always be practical and in sites that are still developing food safety management systems.

“We chose the BRCGS certification programme as we trust their objectivity. The standards are easy to understand and use.”

A101, Turkey's fastest growing retailer



Siarl Siviyer Dixon
AIB International
Certification
Services



Andrew Clarke
Loblaw



Rocío Nunez
BRCGS
Auditor



Frank Webb
LSG Sky Chefs/
Norris Food Services



Jennifer Hughes
BRCGS Professional



Sharon Birkett
OSI Group



Rehab Youssef
Alwafaa Food
Industries



Oliver Hynes
UK Food
Certification



Sonia Andre
BRCGS Training
Partner



Pauline Shaw
BRCGS
Auditor



Bizhan Pourkomaillian
Global Director
McDonald's

Celebrating success in the industry

During the last year, we hosted three BRCGS Connect events in Canada, the USA and the UK. At each event, we announced winners of the prestigious BRCGS Awards that recognise the outstanding commitment, support and performance of individuals and organisations who contribute to the development of BRCGS Standards and the wider food safety industry.

BRCGS Certification Body of the Year (Americas)

AIB International Certification Services

"We are very proud to be the recipient of the BRCGS Certification Body of the Year, Americas Award. We feel that it is a reflection of the commitment that our team has for customer service and the shared belief that everyone deserves safe, high-quality food"

Siarl Siviyer Dixon, AIB International Certification Services

BRCGS Approved Training Partner and Consultant of the Year (Americas)

Andrew Clarke, Loblaw

"I'm delighted to be the recipient of this prestigious award and very grateful to the BRCGS training team for their ongoing support. The Loblaw team have really enjoyed the product safety courses. The ability to deliver the courses in-house to both the food and non-food teams enabled lots of discussion and interactions between the delegates making the courses interactive and fun. I'm also very proud of our BRCGS Professionals and the diligence they have shown in attending the courses, completing the assignments on top of their daily work and their level of engagement and commitment with the training program. Looking forward to welcoming the next cohort of Loblaw BRCGS Professionals later in the year and excited to see the continued expansion of the QFR Loblaw Training and Education program across the business and to our vendor partners."

BRCGS Auditor of the Year – Individual (Americas)

Rocio Nunez

"I feel very happy and honoured for winning the BRCGS Americas auditor award 2023. This means a lot to me. I feel very thankful to BRCGS team, my certification body and the sites who allowed me to achieve this professional goal. I embraced the food safety auditor career in 2011 with passion, believing that we can make a difference while we are auditing at each site at every single audit. We are not only verifying compliance against the requirements of the Standard, but we are also called to involve employees at all levels, from front-line workers to top managers. In this way, all employees can feel the importance of their tasks and their impact on their food safety management systems and make their systems stronger."

BRCGS Certificated Site of the Year (Americas)

LSG Sky Chefs/Norris Foods

"Since 2010, LSG Sky Chefs/Norris Food Services has been fully committed to the BRCGS programmes, and treat it as a roadmap for how we operate, not just an audit to be passed. We believe commitment leads to culture, which leads to compliance. This award validates our strong food safety culture, which has led to eight perfect audits (four for each plant) out of 25! Our entire team 'lives BRCGS' every day, and it shows through this fantastic award." - Frank Webb, LSG Sky Chefs/Norris Food Services

BRCGS Professional of the Year (Americas)

Jennifer Hughes

"I am very blessed and honoured to receive the BRCGS Professional of the Year (Americas) award. It is a privilege to be recognised for the skills that I have learned and implemented by becoming and maintaining my Professional status. Winning this award helps motivate me to continue to strive for excellence and grow as a BRCGS Professional."

CEO Award (Americas)

Sharon Birkett

"I am honoured to receive the BRCGS CEO Award. The BRCGS Standards are embedded deep in the OSI Group organisation and every OSI BRCGS certified location is proud to be a certificated member of BRCGS. It is humbling to receive the recognition because food safety has been my lifelong passion and mission, every person should expect the food they consume to be safe. I am proud to be a contributing member of the BRCGS International Advisory Board and love seeing how BRCGS takes on the emerging food safety trends. BRCGS Professional is an excellent way to skill up the food industry for those who make food safety decision every day. The curriculum is flexible to meet the needs of the organisation and continues to drive excellence in learning and skill development."

BRCGS Certificated Site of the Year (EMEA)

Alwafaa Food Industries

"Winning the BRCGS certificated site award of the year 2024 is a great honour. Receiving this award has definitely strengthened our role as one of the leading companies in producing coating systems for meat and poultry processors. It was a year full of hard work and achievement under the leadership of our CEO Muhamed Youssef, and we believe that we can leave a mark that's why we choose BRCGS. We are proud that we are BRCGS certificated." - Rehab Youssef, Alwafaa Food Industries

BRCGS Certification Body of the Year (EMEA)

UK Food Certification Ltd

"We are delighted to receive this award which is a testament to the hard work of the entire team. It recognises our commitment to delivering exceptional customer service in auditing and certification and reflects our can-do approach. We value our relationship with BRCGS and look forward to continuing our partnership." - Oliver Hynes, Operations Director, UK Food Certification.

BRCGS Approved Training Partner and Consultant of the Year – (EMEA)

Sonia Andre

"Winning this BRCGS Award is really an honour and I'm very touched. It means so much to me. I love teaching and sharing what I know about food safety management. I put a lot of passion and care into it so to be recognised in this way by the BRCGS is a wonderful achievement... Let's continue our joint efforts to make food safer everywhere in the world."

BRCGS Auditor of the Year – (EMEA)

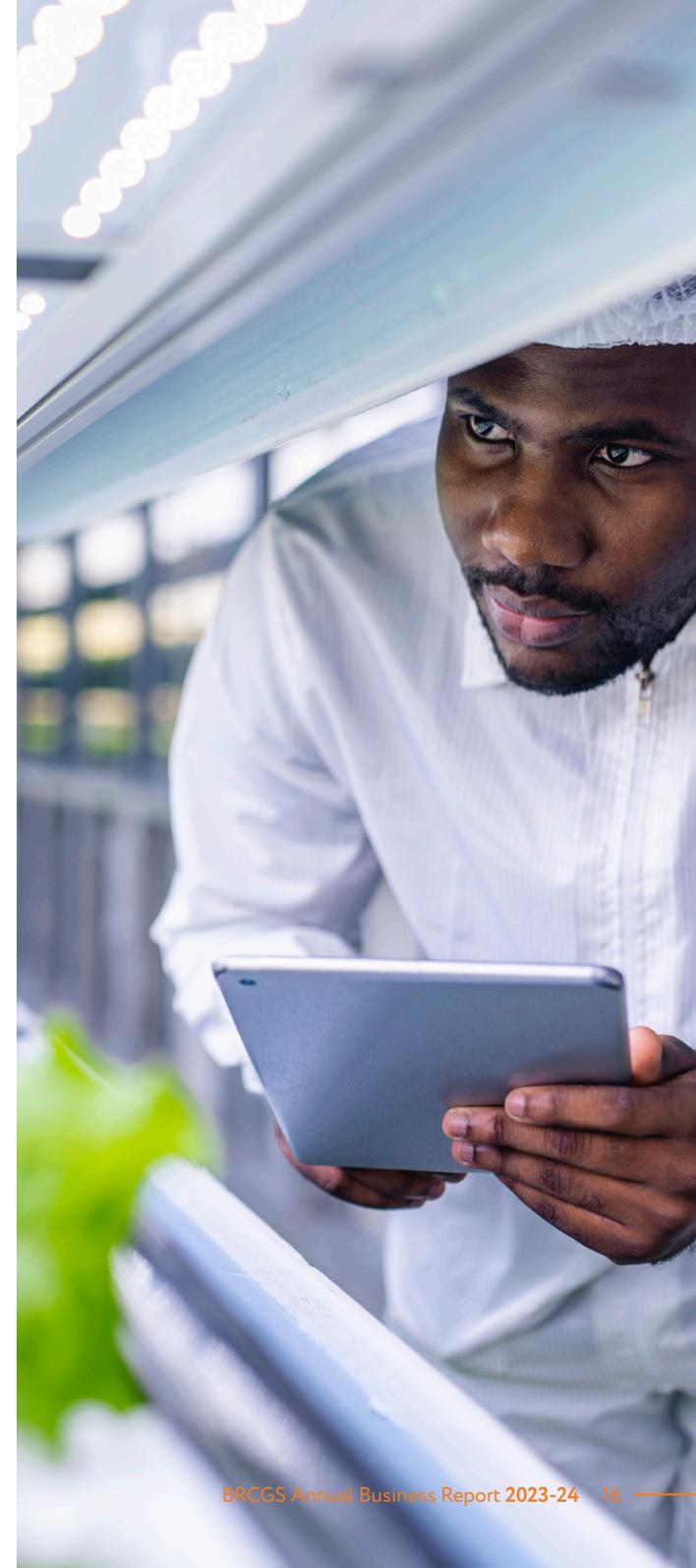
Pauline Shaw

"I'm so honoured to have been awarded the BRCGS Auditor of the Year. At LRQA, we pride ourselves on working with clients to understand their unique needs with expertise across multiple sectors, so to hear that our clients have been so pleased with our work in food safety and to have my contribution recognised by BRCGS is an incredibly special moment for me."

CEO Award (EMEA)

Prof. Bizhan Pourkomailian, Global Director, McDonald's

"I am humbled and honoured to receive the BRCGS CEO Award. As food safety professionals, we only have the safety of the consumer, whomever they may be, on top of mind. McDonald's, as a global brand and present in over 100 countries, has implemented BRCGS Standards to deliver on our promise to the consumer. The Standards are embedded in many of our supplier and distributor sites, and it continues to grow, which is a testament to its value. As a member of the BRCGS International Advisory Board (IAB), I have been given the amazing opportunity to share my experiences, learn from others and assist in shaping future food safety assurance through compliance. Beyond the IAB, BRCGS has provided the platform to allow me to partake on the journey to safer food through standards review committees, webinars and conferences. BRCGS provides an atmosphere of openness, honesty and partnership which allows all members to take a risk in sharing bold ideas to further enhance food safety standards across the globe. The award, I accept on behalf of all who I have had the pleasure of learning from, as it is because of them that I am able to share."



BRCGS digital solutions

We have developed a suite of digital tools to help you respond to greater customer and supply chain assurance needs and growing global regulatory requirements. Not only will these tools support you to maintain compliance, mitigate risk and continuously improve, but it will also help you to future-proof your operations.

BRCGS Horizon

BRCGS certification programmes generate a wealth of data that can be used to inform performance and trends, and provide actionable insight to improve performance and risk management.

Horizon pulls all this data together and with over 45 million data points, provide you with essential supply chain insights, that are analysed and reviewed through a range of easy to use commercial and technical dashboards, and visual displays.

Confidential reporting

BRCGS, in partnership with EQS, provide a confidential whistleblowing system that allows your employees and third parties a way to report wrongdoings internally without fear, so that you can investigate.

Digitalising and simplifying your processes with our technically advanced, secure and cost-effective confidential reporting and case management solution ensures easy compliance with regulation and BRCGS Standards. Test all features of the software with a free, no obligation 7-day trial.

Food Safety Culture Excellence (FSCE) assessment tool

FSCE supports food safety culture improvements, regardless of the type or size of your operation. It will help you to determine the strengths and weaknesses in your food safety capability, provide insight into staff opinion, and gives you visibility of what is happening in your business outside of audits. It makes measuring and improving culture simpler, assisting compliance with BRCGS Standards and with emerging global regulation.

Supplier quality management software solution

A significant issue facing the global food industry is gaining full visibility of the supply chain. New legislation requires food businesses to have near instant identification of all their supply channels and detailed intelligence about its status. The key challenges associated with this centre around the collection, collation, assessment and management of this data. It is often where manual, or semi-manual, systems can fail food businesses in their attempts to meet these requirements. Safefood 360 provides a software solution tailored to BRCGS requirements that equips food businesses to build a complete view of their supply chain.

Digital solutions to help you to future-proof your operations.

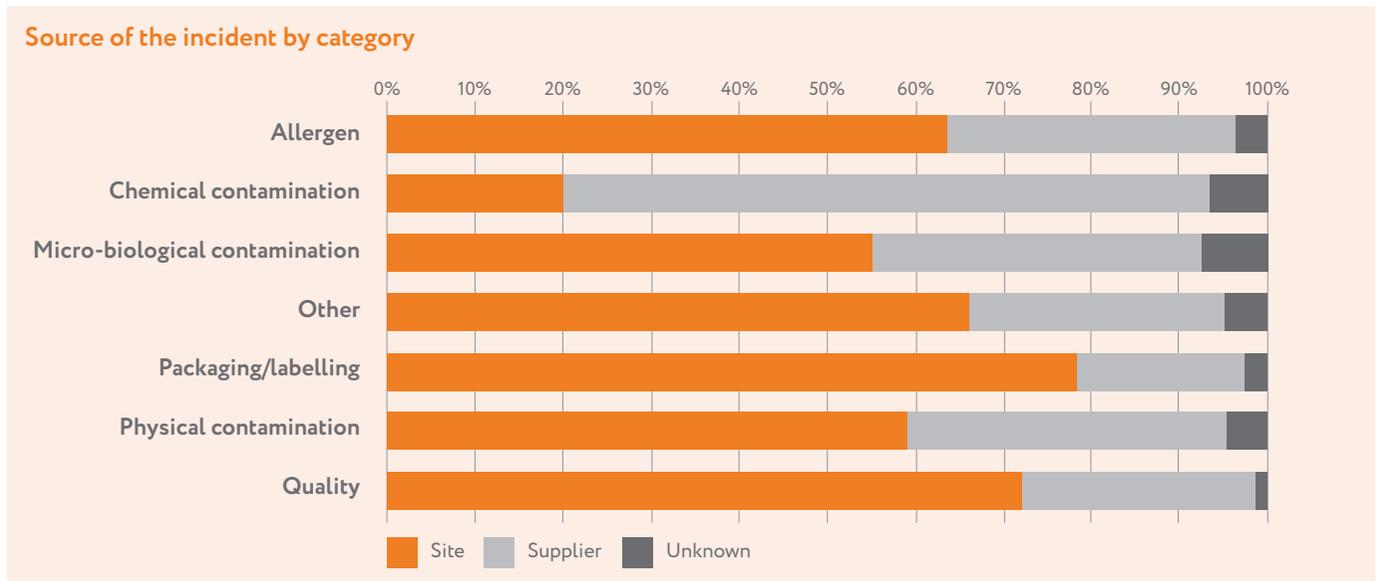
Monitoring product recalls

Product recalls are serious incidents. They represent the significant failure of the product safety system. The requirement for the product to be recalled from the market usually means that the product can harm the end consumer.

BRCGS Standards require any recalls to be reported to the certification body responsible for the site's recent certification in a timely manner. BRCGS Global Standard Food Safety (Issue 9) extends the requirements to food safety-related withdrawals. Issue 9 also specifies that the company has the responsibility to provide sufficient information to enable the certification body to confirm that the site can remain certificated. At a minimum, the corrective action, a root cause analysis and a preventive action plan should be provided with the deadline set at 21 days from the recall date.

In 2023, BRCGS was made aware of 1,442 product incidents, including 943 recalls, reported from 52 countries. We work closely with the certification bodies to make sure they are properly followed up and corrective action is adequate and includes a robust root cause analysis to prevent further product recalls. Product recalls at a site are also a factor used within BRCGS risk rating in determining follow up routine integrity visits at sites.

In 2023, BRCGS was made aware of 1,442 product incidents across 52 countries.



BRCGS



Participate:

All BRCGS publications at your fingertips

Get the full value from your certification and set your path for continuous improvement.

An extensive online portal containing technical guidance, informative documents and supporting materials.

- Includes free access to all BRCGS Standards, Interpretation Guidelines and supporting publications.

Visit www.lgcassure.com/participate to get access today!

Available to sites that are certificated to any one of four BRCGS Standards: Agents and Brokers, Food Safety, Packaging Materials and Storage and Distribution.

Our delivery partners

BRCGS works with the best delivery partners across the globe to deliver certification, with many of our certification bodies working with us for many years. Every year, new delivery partners are welcomed to BRCGS, enabling us to keep pace with evolving industry demands and BRCGS Standard requirements.

BRCGS monitors the ongoing performance of certification bodies to ensure that we only work with the highest-performing, most compliance-oriented delivery partners. The Certification Integrity Team measure their performance against three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

AUDIT PERFORMANCE



Product recalls, complaints, audit report assessment, certification integrity activities: witness audits and integrity visits.

PROTOCOL



Accreditations, audit planning and execution, certification status changes, auditors' competence and CB's internal audits.

SERVICE DELIVERY



Timeliness, BRCGS Directory administration, audit scheduling, CB's responsiveness to BRCGS requests for information and commitment.

BRCGS reviews the KPI requirements to make sure they reflect the important aspects of performance. We use advanced techniques to analyse the data and share the outcome of the assessment with our partners on a monthly basis. It allows us to better understand the results, identify the root causes of any non-conformity and underperformance and discuss actions which can prevent a reoccurrence and deliver continuous improvement.

We use data submitted to the BRCGS Directory to interrogate the trends of over 35,000 audits conducted annually to ensure they meet all audit protocols and guidelines, such as the correct audit duration, correct grading and non-conformities are correctly completed. Timeliness and accuracy of audit outcomes are key stakeholder concerns, and this is continually examined to ensure stakeholders have access to accurate and timely results through the publicly-available records on BRCGS Directory.

New certification bodies are required to be fully trained on BRCGS procedures and systems and they are closely monitored to ensure requirements are being met, and high-quality audits are being delivered. As part of this, we assess all certification body internal processes through the office audit and evaluate auditor performance through witness audits and audit reports review.

Certification body star ratings

Every six months our Certification Integrity Team review certification bodies' KPI performance and rates them from one to five stars based on the performance of the certifications body's management of the BRCGS certification programmes, rather than individual auditors or audits. Transparency is maintained by posting rating results on the BRCGS Directory.

2023 end of year performance
99% of certification bodies with 5- or 4-star rating.

"KPI assessments completed 2023-24

More than 340,000 points were allocated to certification body performance, with over 94% of the checks confirmed as compliant."



Our auditors

BRCGS prides itself on having some of the best auditors in the world, who are instrumental in embedding safety throughout the supply chain. We have rigorous auditor requirements both for initial approval and continual registration.

- Degree or higher education course in relevant discipline
- Formal qualifications in auditing
- Formal qualification in hazard analysis (HACCP)
- The right experience of the product and its associated technologies

In addition, they have completed BRCGS mandatory training courses and category-specific exams. The competency of the auditors is reviewed regularly through compulsory witness audits. To maintain approval status, the auditor should remain active with the specified minimum number of audits completed every year.

We monitor that each of the 2,507 auditors employed by our certification body partners complies with BRCGS requirements. Auditor skill is the main focus of measurement for our Integrity visits and witness audits.

2,507 auditors across the world

BRCGS Academy

In 2023, BRCGS training experienced remarkable growth and impact, with a total of 20,483 delegates successfully trained across 68 countries. Most of this training activity was made possible through our network of approved training partners (ATPs), whose regional presence enables us to extend our global reach and offer unparalleled expertise and support to sites and auditors worldwide.

The ongoing expansion of our approved training partners scheme each year signifies the increasing demand for training opportunities globally, with 385 trainers delivering virtual and face-to-face BRCGS courses. Throughout 2023, our training focus predominantly centred around Global Standard Food Safety (Issue 9), while the Professional Programme courses continued to gain popularity.

The past year provided us with a valuable opportunity to assess and enhance our services, programmes, and customer offerings. In line with our commitment to optimising our services for our delivery partners and customers, we are pleased to announce the evolution of the Performance Enhancement team into the dynamic and innovative BRCGS Academy. This transformation underscores our dedication to providing exceptional support and fostering opportunities for professional and personal growth among our customers.

The success and impact of our training courses and Professional Programme are a testament to our collective efforts in cultivating a culture of excellence in the industry. By equipping those directly involved in the supply chain with the necessary skills and knowledge, we aim to drive continuous improvement and uphold the highest standards of quality and performance.

Meet the Head of BRCGS Academy

Sara Dias

“Sara is looking forward to leading the way in the growth of our global training.”



BRCGS Professional Programme modules



Delivering world-renowned expertise straight to your business

BRCGS training activity during 2023-24:

20,483 delegates trained	2,731 courses delivered	68 countries
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BRCGS training courses

Most popular countries in 2023

- Mexico
- United Kingdom
- Italy
- Canada
- Ecuador

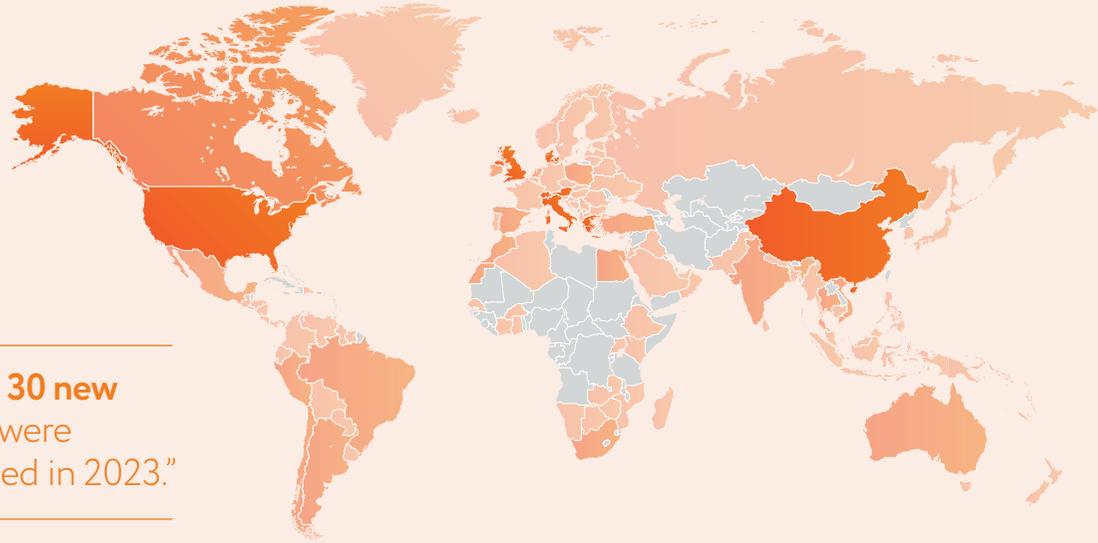
Most popular courses of 2023

- Food Safety Issue 9: Site Training and Site Conversion Training
- Internal Auditor
- Food Safety Issue 9: Lead Auditor and Auditor Conversion Training
- Packaging Materials Issue 6: Site Training
- Vulnerability Assessment for Food Fraud

Approved Training Partner scheme

Our network of Approved Training Partners are BRCGS-recognised trainers who train auditors, sites, consultants and retailers to our Global Standards requirements and protocol. All our trainers are professionals in their fields and are subject to a rigorous approval process and ongoing compliance programme.

We work with a network of 385 Approved Training Partners in total across 46 different countries.



“Around **30 new trainers** were onboarded in 2023.”

BRCGS Professional

Exclusively available to BRCGS certificated sites, BRCGS Professional is a globally recognised holistic learning and development programme which covers the core skills and behaviours required to implement and maintain BRCGS Standards.

14,348 People signed up to BRCGS Professional	678 People completed the programme and graduated	36 Companies Implemented the programme as a company initiative	385 Approved training partners across seven different languages
In 141 countries	In 48 countries	In 25 countries	In 68 countries

Looking ahead to 2024

The next year promises to be a busy year for all at BRCGS with lots of exciting projects planned, and some underway already.

We are currently in the process of revising our Global Standard Packaging Materials. First published in 2001, it was the first packaging standard to be benchmarked by GFSI and is now used by more than 6,000 certificated sites in over 90 countries. Issue 7 is due for publication in autumn 2024.

In August, the first audits against the BRCGS Global Standard Gluten-Free (Issue 4) will commence. We are currently preparing materials to support certificated sites in their transition to the new issue and have recently published the Interpretation Guideline and Key Changes documents, as well as conducting launch webinars. Issue 4 training will be available to auditors and sites in May.

With the new Head of BRCGS Academy in place, we will be working to develop and grow the BRCGS Professional Programme. Not only will this include new courses, it will also introduce a new level to the programme enabling existing Professionals to step-up their learning and professional development.

A crucial part of the BRCGS governance structure, providing strategic and technical input, is our International Advisory Board (IAB). There are two active IAB committees for Europe and the Americas, each consisting of international retailers, food service companies and manufacturers. In the next year, we are excited to be relaunching the the Asia Pacific committee after a period of inactivity to refresh our focus in this region.

Lastly, we plan to continue to develop and improve the BRCGS Directory through the implementation of new features and functionality. As the 'shop window' for BRCGS certificated sites, it is important that this key feature continues to deliver added value for all. This is just a flavour of what is to come in the following year and we look forward to sharing updates with our customers and stakeholders as our initiatives come to fruition.

“With the new Head of BRCGS Academy in place, we will be working to develop and grow the BRCGS Professional Programme.”



TellBRCGS



BRCGS encourages feedback and complaints, as we believe the insight that it provides is invaluable to the maintaining the integrity of BRCGS certification. If you have something to report, let us investigate and put it right.

Feedback should be submitted through our online confidential reporting system, Tell BRCGS. It is available in 10 different languages and you can remain anonymous should you wish to.

Access Tell BRCGS using the QR Code or by visiting www.brcgs.com/contact-us/.

Let's keep in touch

Keep up to date with the latest news and information

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER



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