



Colleen Wegman
President and CEO,
Wegmans Food Markets

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**Food
safety is
everyone's
business!**



The Why

Founded in 1916, Wegmans Food Markets has 101 stores in 7 states. The complexity of our operation, with in-store restaurants, internal manufacturing and distribution, requires that we work closely with our supplier partners and build trust with our customers and employees through two-way communication.

We are proud of our reputation for high standards and operate with a continuous improvement mindset. The company's mission is to “help customers live healthier, better lives through food.” We are focused on managing risk and always looking for the best ways to do so.

To accomplish our goals, we rely on our knowledgeable employees, including an experienced food safety team.

“We first heard about the Global Food Safety Initiative in 2000 through our industry trade association, the Food Marketing Institute. In 2001, we went to a GFSI meeting in Toronto to learn more. We identified it as a best practice and began accepting GFSI-recognised certification for seafood in December 2004.”

The How

Wegmans didn't take a heavy-handed approach when it came to requesting that our food suppliers seek certification to one of the GFSI-recognised Certification Programmes. We were pleasantly surprised to learn when we first started in 2008 that over 40% of our food suppliers were already certified. We realised we needed to walk the talk by requiring GFSI-recognised certification for our own internal manufacturing facilities. Only then could we speak from a position of experience and help our smaller suppliers because we better understood what they needed to do to get certified.

Education, tools, templates, support, regular communications and outreach, we did it all. Today 96% of all our Wegmans Brand suppliers



are certified. All of our internal manufacturing facilities are certified, and we continue the GFSI journey as we start to focus on certification for our stores and distribution facilities as well.

For Wegmans produce suppliers, in addition to conducting numerous Good Agricultural Practices training

sessions throughout the regions where we operate, we paid half the cost of their certification audits when it came to growers' GAP certification. Today, we continue to offer numerous training and education opportunities to help our smaller suppliers on their GFSI journey, partnering with the experts as needed.

The Benefits

At Wegmans, we have seen many benefits for our customers over the years through our support of GFSI. Greater business efficiencies and increased confidence in our food safety processes are just a few examples. It fits right in with our preventive approach to food safety. GFSI helped us to strengthen food safety management systems, reduce risk and has made us better at meeting government food safety requirements. It helps us to stay ahead of new regulations and ensure compliance.

Although Wegmans is a regional supermarket chain, we source ingredients and products from all over the world. GFSI adherence has helped us better manage costs, allowing our small Supplier Quality Assurance

(SQA) team to focus where it is needed most, e.g. attending first production runs and providing support for small suppliers.

We work to prevent food safety incidents from happening in the first place, and this ultimately contributes to better serving our customers and the industry as a whole.

Our engagement with GFSI is beginning to help us support capability building. As an example, we are now using the framework for the GFSI Global Markets Programme as we partner with artisan cheese producers. We help them grow their business, while making the cheeses they supply to us safer for our customers in the process.

Figures

The Wegmans family has taken a leadership role in food safety for over 25 years. Danny Wegman, Wegmans' Chairman is the current GFSI co-sponsor for The Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) board. Colleen Wegman, CEO is actively engaged in Food Safety initiatives through our trade association; the Food Marketing Institute (FMI). Food safety has never been a competitive issue for Wegmans Food Markets and that is the same for GFSI. For us, the key to food

safety is Prevention and the Global Food Safety Initiative supports that. We actively promote GFSI within our own company, further back our supply chain and forward as certification heads to retail. The Global Food Safety Initiative is more than certification. It becomes a way of life and is firmly entrenched in the food safety culture at Wegmans.

We believe that GFSI provides all the stakeholders with an international forum

for food safety where we get to share best practices, build our food industry network and learn from industry leaders (e.g. at GFSI events, Focus Days, Global Food Safety Conference, Technical Work Groups, Local Groups). GFSI works to stay current and continues to evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of the consumer along with changes in food science and regulation. There is strength in us all partnering when it comes to Food Safety.

