



REPORT ON ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE GLOBAL FOOD REGULATORY SCIENCE SOCIETY (GFORSS)

March 2024 – October 2025

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Introduction

This report presents the activities and achievements of the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) since the last Meeting of Members and General Assembly held in March 2024.

The intention is to provide an overview of the Society's initiatives, impacts, and future directions for GForSS Members and the Board of Directors.

Beyond a record of events, the report highlights how GForSS initiatives have been strategically designed to ensure sustainable impact — building institutional and individual capacities, strengthening the science base for food regulatory systems, and establishing collaborative networks that extend well beyond single interventions.

Through these actions, GForSS continues to consolidate its role as a global hub for food regulatory science, supporting the generation, translation, and dissemination of knowledge that informs effective, risk-based, and innovation-friendly food regulatory systems.

Advancing Analytical Science and Laboratory Competence and Analytical Training on Emerging Contaminants

GForSS has continued to lead efforts in enhancing analytical capacity and harmonization of laboratory practices, particularly through its operation of the Arab Section of AOAC INTERNATIONAL, which is hosted by the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO) and operated by GForSS.

A key milestone within this framework was the launch of the AOAC INTERNATIONAL Laboratory Proficiency Testing (PT) Program for Arab laboratories — an initiative aimed at strengthening technical competency, ensuring alignment with international standards (ISO/IEC 17025), and supporting reliable generation of analytical results that can inform regulatory and trade decisions.

Complementing this, GForSS initiated a Call for Methods on Gluten Analysis in Food, as part of ongoing efforts to harmonize analytical methods in the Arab region for regulatory applications. This initiative seeks to establish a single regional reference for methods to be used by both regulatory authorities and the food industry for compliance verification, thereby supporting consistency and transparency in enforcement.

These concerted efforts also led to the creation of an Expert Working Group, reporting to Technical Sub-Committee 9 of the Arab Food Standardization Committee, mandated to provide technical advice and coordinate regional analytical method harmonization activities under the Arab Codex and standardization frameworks.

The above initiatives were reinforced through hands-on training, such as the Workshop on the Determination of Gluten in Gluten-Free Foods (Muscat, August 2024), and technical exchanges under the AOAC Arab Section Symposium (Amman, 2024).

Building on its laboratory-centered initiatives, GForSS supported the development of regional analytical capacity for emerging chemical contaminants, particularly those relevant to global regulatory discussions.

This included the PFAS Capacity-Building Initiative (Lucknow, India, November 2024) and the Food Safety Capacity-Building Workshop on Emerging Contaminants (Singapore, June 2025), both aimed at enhancing analytical proficiency, updating monitoring protocols, and introducing harmonized training modules for national laboratories.

IMPACT

Strengthened laboratory competence, increased harmonization of analytical methods, establishment of a formal expert advisory mechanism under Arab standardization structures, and deeper integration of Arab laboratories into global analytical and regulatory science networks and improved regional readiness to detect and monitor complex contaminants, facilitating the generation of data to support exposure assessments and international standard-setting.

Fostering Regional Coordination and Participation in Codex

GForSS has prioritized the development of Codex “Communities of Practice” across regions — structured platforms that encourage collaborative engagement of national Codex programs, promote scientific dialogue, and strengthen the participation of countries traditionally underrepresented in Codex proceedings.

The Arab Codex Colloquia held in Amman (2024) and Muscat (2025) served as key milestones in this effort, enabling regional coordination on topics such as food labeling, contaminants, and pesticide residues, while also fostering thematic working groups under regional coordination structures.

Similarly, engagement in CCNASWP (FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific) activities — notably the Side Event on Scopoletin in Noni Juice (February 2025) — contributed to enhancing data-sharing and analytical coordination among Pacific Island and partner countries.

In parallel, the Asia Codex and Food Regulatory Forum (Bangkok, August 2025) marked a landmark convergence of Asian Codex programs and regulators, bridging science, innovation, and policy. The Forum emphasized the importance of fostering innovation-friendly regulatory environments and improving the evidence base supporting standards development in fast-evolving food sectors.

IMPACT

Strengthened regional Codex communities of practice, enhanced scientific engagement, and improved inclusiveness and evidence-based participation in Codex processes across Arab, Asian, and Pacific regions.

Building Competence in Risk Assessment and Evidence-Based Decision-Making

GForSS continued to strengthen the science base for regulatory decision-making, advancing capacity for risk assessment, prioritization, and policy formulation grounded in scientific evidence.

Key achievements included the Workshop on Risk-Based Regulatory Decision-Making (Muscat, 2024) and the Food Additives Workshop in Morocco (Bouznika, 2025), which introduced practical tools for hazard evaluation and decision frameworks for food additive approval in alignment with international practices.

The Workshop on Biotechnology and the Future of Food (Abu Dhabi, 2024) further expanded dialogue on the regulatory oversight of emerging technologies, including biotechnology and novel ingredients, focusing on the need for transparent, risk-based frameworks to manage innovation responsibly.

The FoodSafeR dissemination workshop (Paris, 2025), conducted under an EU-funded initiative, showcased methodologies and digital tools developed to enhance preparedness for emerging food hazards and to strengthen global cooperation in hazard identification and management.

GForSS also implemented a series of thematic webinars between 2024 and 2025, serving as a cornerstone of its knowledge dissemination program.

Topics ranged from threshold-driven allergen risk management, titanium dioxide safety, and Halal analytical methods, to ultra-processed foods, risk-based regulatory approaches, and food safety information exchange.

Each webinar attracted 100–250 participants from regulatory authorities, academia, and industry — offering an accessible channel for continuous learning and evidence-sharing.

IMPACT

Enhanced regulatory competence in food risk assessment and decision-making, wider dissemination of technical knowledge, and expanded access to science-based resources across regions and sectors.

Strengthening Linkages between Science, Policy, and Practice

Across all its activities, GForSS has sought to support the adoption of best practices by food regulators and policy makers, encouraging the application of evidence-based and risk-analysis-driven approaches to food regulatory decision-making.

By integrating laboratory development, Codex engagement, risk analysis, and training initiatives, GForSS has helped national authorities and regional partners build regulatory programs grounded in science and aligned with international good practices.

This cross-cutting integration was visible across events such as the Egyptian Global Food Safety Symposium (Cairo, 2024), the Global Food Regulatory Science Symposium (Dubai, 2024), and the Oman International Conference on Food Safety and Quality (April 2025) — all reinforcing the connection between scientific evidence, policymaking, and implementation.

GForSS also continued to produce scientific and policy communications, such as expert interpretations of regulatory updates (e.g., on FD&C Red No. 3 and Acesulfame Potassium), further bridging the gap between technical developments and regulatory decision-makers.

IMPACT

Reinforced integration between science and regulatory practice, improved translation of scientific evidence into practical regulatory measures, and strengthened institutional capacity to implement risk-based approaches to food control.

Conclusion

From March 2024 to October 2025, GForSS has implemented a coherent, cross-regional program of work that aligns analytical capacity building, scientific training, and policy integration under a unified vision:

To strengthen the science foundation of food regulation and foster globally interconnected communities of regulatory practice.

Through the support of organizations such as AIDSMO, AOAC International, Codex regional coordination structures, the European Union, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture – U.S. Codex Office, GForSS continues to act as a catalyst for knowledge generation, dissemination, and application in food regulatory science.

A detailed list of activities and events corresponding to this reporting period is appended to the full report for reference.

Appendix: List of Activities and Key Events

Scientific Programs and Initiatives

1. Supporting Food Laboratory Cooperation in the Arab Region under the Arab Section of AOAC INTERNATIONAL

1.1 Arab Section — Launch of the AOAC INTERNATIONAL Laboratory Proficiency Testing (PT) Program

Period: Ongoing (March 2024 – October 2025)

Location: Virtual

Objectives: The PT Program aims to enhance analytical competency among food control laboratories across the Arab region. It provides internationally recognized proficiency testing schemes under the AOAC framework to ensure consistency, accuracy, and reliability of testing results across participating laboratories.

Goals:

- ❖ Improve the technical capabilities of national laboratories in the analysis of food safety parameters.
- ❖ Align Arab laboratories with international accreditation standards (ISO/IEC 17025).
- ❖ Strengthen collaboration among analytical institutions in Arab countries.

Outputs and Achievements:

- ❖ Increased laboratory participation from over 10 Arab states.
- ❖ Enhanced comparability and traceability of analytical data.
- ❖ Improved capacity of laboratories in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco for proficiency-based performance evaluation.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/04/01/aoacarab_pt/

1.2 Call for Methods: Gluten Analysis in Food

Date: March 2024

Location: Virtual

Objectives: To identify and validate analytical methods suitable for the quantitative determination of gluten in food matrices, ensuring the reliability of gluten-free labeling and supporting consumer protection for individuals with celiac disease.

Goals:

- ❖ Strengthen regional capacity in gluten testing and method standardization.
- ❖ Support the development of harmonized protocols aligned with Codex and AOAC standards.
- ❖ Build a network of Arab laboratories contributing to the gluten analysis reference database.

Outputs:

- ❖ Launch of the Arab Working Group on Quantitative Methods for Gluten Analysis, coordinated by GForSS.
- ❖ Engagement of public and private sector laboratories across several Arab countries.
- ❖ Contribution to future Codex and AOAC method harmonization initiatives.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/04/16/methods_gluten/

1.3 Arab Section of AOAC — 2nd Symposium & Side Event

Date: April 2024

Location: Amman, Jordan

Objectives: To convene experts from academia, regulatory authorities, and industry to discuss the future of analytical science and food safety testing in the Arab world.

Goals:

- ❖ Exchange of regional experiences in laboratory accreditation.
- ❖ Strengthen collaboration under the AOAC Arab Section framework.
- ❖ Promote AOAC Official Methods and regional validation initiatives.

Outputs:

- ❖ More than 80 participants from 12 countries.
- ❖ Consensus on developing region-specific analytical guidance documents.
- ❖ Agreement on establishing an inter-laboratory validation scheme for key food matrices.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/04/18/2024_arabaoac_annual/

2. 1st Egyptian Global Food Safety Symposium (EGFoSS)

Date: 28–30 May 2024

Location: Cairo, Egypt

Objectives: To introduce a national platform for dialogue and collaboration between government, academia, and the private sector on food safety and regulatory science.

Goals:

- ❖ Strengthen Egypt's engagement in global food safety networks.
- ❖ Present Egypt's food safety achievements and future roadmap.
- ❖ Provide training on laboratory performance and data reliability.

Outputs:

- ❖ Participation of over 150 delegates.
- ❖ Technical sessions on analytical methods, risk assessment, and food inspection systems.
- ❖ Egyptian initiative for food regulatory science, workshops on laboratory capacity, and engagement with AOAC and Codex experts.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/05/11/2024_egfoss/

3. 3rd Arab Codex Colloquium

Date: 11–13 June 2024

Location: Amman, Jordan

Objectives: To promote unified Arab participation in Codex Alimentarius deliberations, facilitating scientific and technical coordination among member states.

Goals:

- ❖ Build regional understanding of Codex procedural requirements.
- ❖ Provide data-driven training to Codex focal points and scientific officers.
- ❖ Encourage evidence-based regional positions in Codex negotiations.

Outputs:

- ❖ Representation from 15 Arab countries.
- ❖ Drafting of Arab positions on food labeling, contaminants, and pesticide residues.
- ❖ Adoption of regional roadmap for Codex coordination under AOAC and GForSS.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/05/14/2024_arabcodexcolloquium/

4. FoodMicro Pre-Conference Workshop

Date: 8 July 2024

Location: Virtual

Objectives: To prepare microbiologists and regulators for participation in the FoodMicro 2024 conference by presenting new findings on microbial contamination and control methods.

Outputs:

- ❖ Enhanced awareness of microbial hazard detection.
- ❖ Capacity building for early-career scientists through interactive sessions.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2024/07/06/2024foodmicroworkshop/>

5. Training on the Determination of Gluten in Gluten-Free Foods

Date: 20–21 August 2024

Location: Muscat, Oman

Objectives: To strengthen analytical laboratory skills in measuring gluten levels using validated AOAC and Codex reference methods.

Goals:

- ❖ Transfer analytical know-how to regulatory and industrial laboratories.
- ❖ Promote harmonized testing and interpretation of results.

Outputs:

- ❖ Participation of 35 laboratory professionals from Oman and neighboring countries.
- ❖ Improved confidence in gluten quantification and reporting accuracy.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/07/30/2024_omglutentraining/

6. 8th Roundtable Discussion — CCNFSDU44

Date: 29 August 2024

Location: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Objectives: To align scientific perspectives on nutritional labeling and dietary standards before the 44th Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses.

Outputs:

- ❖ Joint positions developed on infant nutrition and fortification guidelines.
- ❖ Enhanced regional collaboration with Codex committees.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/08/28/8throundtable_asiacodex/

7. FoodSafeR Session at the 2024 IUFOST Congress

Date: 9 September 2024

Location: Rimini, Italy

Objectives: To present the FoodSafeR initiative outcomes and methodologies on emerging hazard management.

Outputs:

- ❖ Dissemination of risk assessment tools.
- ❖ Publication of best practices on integrating FoodSafeR tools into regulatory frameworks.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2024/09/01/2024iufostcongress/>

8. Contribution to Global Food Regulators Summit (GFRS)

Date: 19–21 September 2024

Location: New Delhi, India

Objectives: To engage with international regulators on advancing global cooperation in food safety frameworks and risk-based regulatory practices.

Outputs:

- ❖ GForSS presented its regional capacity-building model.
- ❖ Agreed on future collaboration with Indian and ASEAN regulators.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/09/21/2024_gfrs/

9. International Symposium – Supporting the Development of the Camel Milk Sector

Date: 24–25 September 2024

Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

Objectives: To foster regulatory and scientific collaboration for camel-derived food products, addressing standards, safety, and market access.

Outputs:

- ❖ 120 participants from 10 countries.
- ❖ Draft framework for Codex camel milk standardization proposed.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/09/20/2024_camelmilkworkshop/

10. Workshop — Introduction to Risk-Based Food Regulatory Decision Making

Date: 29 September 2024

Location: Muscat, Oman

Objectives: To introduce fundamental principles of risk-based decision-making in food regulation, emphasizing science-led approaches.

Outputs:

- ❖ 40 participants.
- ❖ Developed draft templates for risk prioritization.
- ❖ Practical frameworks for regulatory agencies and tools for prioritizing risk in food inspection.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/09/23/2024_omanraworkshop/

11. Workshop — Biotechnology and the Future of Food

Date: 30 September 2024

Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

Objectives: To explore biotechnology's role in ensuring food safety, security, and sustainability.

Outputs:

- ❖ Recommendations for regulatory frameworks governing GMOs and novel ingredients.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/09/29/2024_uaeibiotechworkshop/

12. 3rd Global Food Regulatory Science Symposium

Date: 21–24 October 2024

Location: Dubai, UAE

Objectives: To review advances in regulatory science, policy integration, analytical innovation, and risk communication.

Outputs:

- ❖ More than 300 experts participated.
- ❖ Thematic sessions on contaminants, analytical chemistry, and food authenticity.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/10/11/2024_gforssymposium/

13. Capacity Building Initiative for PFAS

Date: 18–20 November 2024

Location: Lucknow, India

Objectives: To enhance technical expertise of ISO/IEC 17025 assessors regarding PFAS determination in food and the environment.

Outputs:

- ❖ 60 laboratory experts trained.
- ❖ Updated PFAS monitoring protocols distributed (Developed analytical protocols and updated training modules).

For more information: https://gforss.org/2024/10/26/2024_pfas/

14. First Virtual Meeting of AFRAF

Date: 22 January 2025

Location: Virtual

Objectives: To establish an operational framework for the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF).

Outputs:

- ❖ Governance charter adopted.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/01/06/2025aframeeting/>

15. CCAFRICA25 Side Event

Date: 30 January 2025

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Objectives: To coordinate regional participation in Codex discussions.

Outputs:

- ❖ Consensus on strengthening African scientific data submissions and regional scientific coordination.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/01/30/ccafrika25sideevent/>

16. CCNASWP Side Event – Scopoletin in Noni Juice

Date: 6 February 2025

Location: Virtual

Objectives: To discuss data collection methodologies for scopoletin in Noni juice.

Outputs:

- ❖ Regional database on scopoletin established and analytical results compiled.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2025/02/05/ccnaswp17_side/

17. 2025 Annual Scientific Day of Military Laboratories

Date: 26 February 2025

Location: Amman, Jordan

Objectives: To highlight the role of defense laboratories in national food safety monitoring.

Outputs:

- ❖ Presented joint studies with GForSS on contaminant monitoring and testing methods with GForSS support.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/02/06/2025scientificday/>

18. Workshop — International Best Practices – Review and Approval of Food Additives

Date: 16 April 2025

Location: Bouznika, Morocco

Objectives: To discuss best practices for assessing and approving food additives under international frameworks.

Outputs:

- ❖ Regional guidebook on food additive approval developed.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/04/01/2025mafaworkshop/>

19. Fourth Arab Codex Colloquium

Date: 19–20 April 2025

Location: Muscat, Oman

Objectives: To continue efforts in strengthening Arab engagement with Codex processes.

Outputs:

- ❖ Regional coordination statements and thematic training outcomes such as the creation of Working groups for several Codex Committees.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/04/01/2025acc/>

20. Oman 7th International Conference on Food Safety and Quality

Date: 21–23 April 2025

Location: Muscat, Oman

Objectives: To integrate scientific advances into policy frameworks.

Outputs:

- ❖ 200 participants attended; outcomes shared on regional risk assessment collaboration.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2025/04/02/2025_omanicfsq/

21. Food Safety Capacity Building Initiative on Emerging Contaminants

Date: 3–5 June 2025

Location: Singapore

Objectives: To provide advanced training on detection and management of emerging contaminants such as PFAS.

Outputs:

- ❖ Training for 50 analytical scientists; published toolkit for contaminant screening.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/05/19/2025emergingcontaminants/>

22. Dissemination Workshop on FoodSafeR Outcomes

Date: 19 June 2025

Location: Paris, France

Objectives: To disseminate FoodSafeR results, tools, and methodologies.

Outputs:

- ❖ Knowledge-sharing among 100+ participants; digital resources released
- ❖ Presented 10 case studies and decision-support tools.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/06/10/2025foodsaferr/>

23. International Workshop on NAMs in Future Food Safety

Date: 18–20 June 2025

Location: Singapore

Objectives: To introduce new approach methodologies (NAMs) in food safety risk assessment.

Outputs:

- ❖ Policy paper released on integrating NAMs into risk assessment.

For more information: https://gforss.org/2025/06/28/frsupdate_namsworkshop/

24. Workshop: Data Collection and Analysis for Codex Proceedings

Date: 30–31 July 2025

Location: Muscat, Oman

Objectives: To build regional expertise in scientific data collection supporting Codex standards.

Outputs:

- ❖ Participants from 12 countries trained in data analysis techniques.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/07/09/2025dataforcodexworkshop/>

25. Asia Codex and Food Regulatory Forum

Date: 18–20 August 2025

Location: Bangkok, Thailand

Objectives: To bridge science, innovation, and policy in food regulation.

Outputs:

- ❖ Agreed framework for data exchange among Asian and multi-regional regulators.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/07/11/2025asiacodexforum/>

26. CCNE12 Side Event on Novel Foods

Date: 10 November 2025

Location: Muscat, Oman

Objectives: To discuss regulatory frameworks for novel foods.

Outputs:

- ❖ Draft Document on novel foods submitted for Codex.

For more information: <https://gforss.org/2025/10/03/ccne12novelsideevent/>

Webinars (Sep 2024 – Jul 2025)

The webinars aimed to disseminate specialized regulatory knowledge, share recent scientific updates, and promote evidence-based approaches in food control systems. They were held virtually and attended by 100–250 participants.

1. Harnessing Technology in Food Safety Information Exchange — 17 September 2024

- https://gforss.org/2024/09/03/2024webinar_harnessingtech/

2. Titanium Dioxide – Safety Assessment as a Food Additive — 1 October 2024

- https://gforss.org/2024/09/20/2024webinar_tio2/

3. Veterinary Residues – Monitoring Programs for Hormones — 15 October 2024

- https://gforss.org/2024/10/02/2024webinar_vetresidues/

4. Threshold Driven Risk Management for Allergens — 29 October 2024

- https://gforss.org/2024/10/19/2024webinar_pal/

5. Methods of Analysis Supporting Halal Certification — 12 November 2024

- https://gforss.org/2024/11/05/2024webinar_halal/

6. Supporting Camel-Derived Products – Camel Milk Standards — 26 November 2024

- https://gforss.org/2024/11/14/2024webinar_camelmilk/

7. Defining Processed and Ultra Processed Foods (UPF) — 10 December 2024

- https://gforss.org/2024/11/30/2024webinar_upf/

8. Risk-Based Decision-Making in Food Regulations — 3 July 2025

- <https://gforss.org/2025/07/01/2025rbdmwebinar/>

Scientific Communications and Updates

1. FDA Revokes FD&C Red No. 3 Authorization — GForSS provided scientific interpretation of implications.

- https://gforss.org/2025/01/15/frsupdate_erythrosine/

2. Global Safety Reaffirmed for Acesulfame Potassium (E950) — Summary of EFSA assessment published, Highlighting the reaffirmation of its ADI at 15 mg/kg body weight.

- https://gforss.org/2025/05/07/frsupdate_acesulfamek/