

## GFSI Announces USDA AMS GAP Plus + Certification Programme Achieves Technical Equivalence

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**PARIS, 13 August 2018** – The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) Board of Directors is pleased to announce the [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Agricultural Marketing Service \(AMS\)](#) has achieved Technical Equivalence against Version 7.1 of the [GFSI Benchmarking Requirements](#) for their [Harmonized GAP Plus +](#) programme.

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Services is responsible for the management and oversight of the USDA Good Agricultural Practices Program and this achievement means its content meets the scope of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements Key Elements (Part III). Technical Equivalence is limited to government-owned food safety certification programmes only, and differs from GFSI recognition for non-governmental certification programmes, which also includes an assessment of the certification programme governance and operational management.

Delighted with this significant milestone, **USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Gregory Ibach**, said, “This important international recognition on paperwork, saves money and time, and ultimately grows markets for American farmers. Technical Equivalence means USDA can now provide a single audit that meets international regulatory and market-driven food safety requirements”.

Commenting on this achievement, **Chairman of the GFSI Board of Directors, Mike Robach**, stated, “Developing strong public/private partnerships to advance our vision *food for consumers everywhere* is part of the GFSI Board’s strategic priorities. The USDA GAP Plus + certification programme achieving equivalence through our new Technical Equivalence for government-based certification programmes is a milestone. GFSI welcomes the USDA as a new partner towards our shared goal of reducing food risks, reducing redundancy, and improving operational efficiency for American producers”.

GFSI continually evolves its benchmarking requirements to reflect emerging trends in food safety, industry best practices and stakeholder input, and congratulates USDA on their achievement and for taking the steps to address collective concerns and improve consumer trust.

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### About the Global Food Safety Initiative:

The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) brings together key actors of the food industry to collaboratively drive continuous improvement in food safety management around the world. With a vision of Safe food for consumers everywhere, food industry leaders created GFSI in 2000 to find collaborative solutions to collective concerns to reduce food safety risks, audit duplication and costs while building trust throughout the supply chain. The GFSI community works on a volunteer basis and is composed of world’s leading food safety experts from retail, manufacturing and food service companies, as well as international organisations, governments, academia and service providers to the global food industry. GFSI is powered by [The Consumer Goods Forum \(CGF\)](#), a global industry network working to support Better Lives Through Better Products. [www.mygfsi.com](http://www.mygfsi.com)

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