

## NEWSFLASH

### Meet the experts at the SAI Global/EFSIS Conference

There is still a chance to book your place at the third Annual SAI Global/EFSIS Conference, which takes place in Milton Keynes on 21st March 2007. The theme of this year's Conference is "BRC and Beyond".

The first step to certification is choosing to work with BRC and EFSIS, but retailers and specifiers are making more and more demands on producers. This Conference aims to address these issues.

"Presentations will be given by three major organisations including an international manufacturer and a UK multiple retailer who will outline their requirements, as well as a global fast food restaurant chain who will explain how it tackles supplier issues," says Carole Payne, Food Director SAI Global/EFSIS. "An EFSIS client will give an account of its experiences of BRC and other requirements and, naturally, you will hear from the EFSIS team.

The Conference will be held at Jury's Inn in Central Milton Keynes which is very convenient for rail and road travel. It will commence with tea and coffee from 09.30am and start at 10am, with a buffet lunch around 1pm and finish by 4pm.

The cost is £60 which includes lunch, copies of all presentations and vouchers for car parking near the hotel. Places are limited to 200 delegates so to avoid disappointment please book early. To confirm your place please complete the attached booking form and enclose your remittance. If you require any further assistance, please contact: [hazel\\_markham@efsis.com](mailto:hazel_markham@efsis.com). ■

## EFSIS' portfolio of services continues to grow

SAI Global/EFSIS has an expanding portfolio of outsourced technical services tailored to match individual client requirements. We have developed a stand alone department – the Technical Contract Management team – who offer a wide choice of technical solutions for food packaging and distribution requirements. "Initially we began by offering Supply Chain Assurance for clients to help them manage their suppliers' third party inspection programme," says Jackie Kerr, Commercial Manager. "Generally we are the preferred certification company for the client but we recognise that some suppliers may already have BRC or IFS (International Food Standard) with other parties so we manage the whole programme for the client.



First of all we make sure that suppliers are undertaking audits with recognised and accredited third parties. We check that the scope of the certificate for the factories includes the products that are supplied to the clients and that there are no exemptions. We assess the audit report and check that any non-conformances have been satisfactorily resolved, particularly where these may be the cause of consumer complaints."

We have developed a service to manage the client's customer complaints and indeed this is a service that EFSIS has been providing to JD Wetherspoons for over three years. Any complaint received relating to food safety, such as a foreign body or an alleged food poisoning is reported to EFSIS who will investigate and resolve with the supplier and ensure that the customer is

satisfied. Trend analysis shows that this has led to a considerable reduction in the number of complaints received by Wetherspoon.

We also offer legal and technical specification services

expanding is the validation of nutritional data and claims made either on product packaging or menus. This involves the review of documentation from the supplier and the assessment of menus and labels prior to



From left to right is Raji Thomhill, Louise James, Jackie Kerr, Trefor Slatter and Nadia Hasan.

for clients. We ensure that all raw materials and finished products have accurate detailed technical specifications which satisfy both legal and food safety requirements as well as Trading Standards declarations. In some cases, for example Burger King, our service has been extended to cover a range of European languages thus incorporating requirements for translation as well as adherence to locally specific legislation.



"For other clients such as PepsiCo, who already have ample internal technical resources and well-developed technical systems and procedures, we have assisted with the gathering and assessment of compliance data on a wide range of topics. This enables the Company to provide accurate and up-to-date information for all raw material suppliers.

A very topical area which is

publication. Legal and technical updates tailored to the particular products or sector in which a client operates are popular choices for outsourcing as it means that targeted information is received rather than a mountain of data. The early warning service on topical issues ensures that businesses can stay ahead of the game.

The list of services goes on, and really is as long and diverse as a client requires, ranging from the attendance at first production runs, assessing product quality either at factory, depot or store, developing internal policies or procedures to training staff in company specific standards.

SAI Global/EFSIS conducts a variety of these services for blue chip food companies such as PepsiCo, Kellogg's, Burger King, Center Parcs and JD Wetherspoons. To service these clients requires a dedicated team of staff with excellent technical knowledge and skills headed by Jackie Kerr and her team. ■

# Storage and Distribution shows how SAI Global/EFSIS leads the way

SAI Global/EFSIS inspects more food worldwide, to a wider range of internationally accepted standards, than any other body. But there is more to it than that. The story of the EFSIS Storage and Distribution standard, an idea which has been taken up by the big standard setting bodies, shows how SAI Global/EFSIS has led innovation and development in food industry standards.

"We realised there was a major gap in the system of inspection and certification in the food industry as early as 2002," says Carole Payne. "At the time farmers were already covered, in the UK at least, by a whole range of standards. Food processing was covered by the BRC standard, but there was a gaping hole. The entire storage and distribution sector was left out."

SAI Global/EFSIS produced the EFSIS Storage and Distribution standard, precisely to cover those gaps. "The EFSIS/BRC food standard could not be used to cover places where food wasn't actually made," explains Carole Payne. "What we introduced was a unique new standard, targeted directly to aspects of distribution, such as temperature control or vehicle maintenance."

"It got us closer to our goal of a fully assured food chain, demonstrating the best standards to consumers from the farm to the plate," she says. "The new

standard was not developed in isolation. We worked for several years with the food distribution sector to get it right. That included input from many of the companies involved. We knew we had to get a standard they could buy into, as well as one which would be as credible for retailers and



Picture shows Maxim warehouse

consumers as any of the other standards to which we work."

The new standard was quickly accepted. "The big manufacturers and food service companies welcomed it; it gave them confidence in knowing that high standards are maintained in their central distribution centres, hubs and throughout the distribution process," says Carole Payne. "It was officially recognised. SAI Global/EFSIS was the first

certification body to be awarded EN45011 accreditation from the UK accreditation body UKAS for a

standard of this type."

The experience of D. Maxim Logistics, one of the first companies to be inspected to the new standard, showed how valuable it could be. Andy Lawrence, Managing Director says; "Working to an EFSIS standard provides not only a

perspective framework for the way we run our operations, but also a commercial differentiation from our competitors. Our clients are confident to promote their logistics services through Maxims, in the understanding that EFSIS certification guarantees the standards that are required in the Food Ingredient Supply Chain, and are not always found elsewhere"

The success of the EFSIS Storage and Distribution standard encouraged some of the big standard setting bodies to take up

the idea. SAI Global/EFSIS worked closely with the BRC on its new BRC Global Standard – Storage and Distribution. "Although we got there first, we haven't tried to keep it to ourselves," says Carole Payne. "SAI Global/EFSIS has worked closely with the BRC throughout the development of its system of standards and this was no exception. We played a major role in the development of this standard."

"We are conducting a thorough analysis of the BRC version to see when we should adopt it, but until it has been accredited by UKAS the question remains theoretical."

IFS has also launched the IFS Transport, Logistic and Storage Standard. "We were able to extend our scope immediately to cover this one, as it is an extension to the existing IFS standard, rather than a separate new standard," says Carole Payne.

SAI Global/EFSIS takes the imitation as a compliment. "We're delighted that the BRC and IFS have introduced their own standards," says Carole Payne. "It shows that we made the right decision when we developed the EFSIS Storage and Distribution standard in the first place. It is an area which the food industry cannot afford to ignore. SAI Global/EFSIS led the way. The rest of the industry is now following." ■

## EFSIS to SAI Global – A Brand Transition

There have been several changes to the branding being adopted by EFSIS since becoming part of SAI Global a little over a year ago. The EFSIS website was the first to carry the SAI Global branding and gradually over the past year it has been introduced on selected communication material and on this Newsletter.

This is all part of a detailed brand transition plan that will see the SAI Global brand become more prominent everywhere. The EFSIS name will be retained and used as a product brand within the framework of the Masterbrand strategy. EFSIS will now be known as SAI Global, offering EFSIS products and services as well as others not branded as EFSIS.

SAI Global owns a wide variety of businesses around the world, offering a huge range of different but linked services. These include compliance training, the publishing of standards, management systems and product certification as well as a whole range of food and non-food assurance services. It operates in fields as diverse as the aerospace and automotive industries to the more familiar food sector.

The diverse mix of products and services, coupled with the array of industries SAI Global operates within, makes it essential to have a Masterbrand strategy that will ensure SAI Global is the recognised provider of all of these services around the world. EFSIS products will continue to be

offered where they are appropriate to the food industry.

Shown here is the 5tick Standardsmark™ which will be used in the food industry in the not too distant future.

Paul Ruocco, Marketing and International Operations Director, said: "We will be rolling out the new look across the world in the year



Quality Endorsed Company

ahead, accurately reflecting our modern and strong organisation. You will also see the EFSIS web site incorporated in the main SAI Global site,

certificates will carry SAI Global branding and all of our communications will be undertaken as SAI Global.

"This is, of course, only a change in branding, not of service delivery. We will continue to offer the same range of products and services, but these will now be enhanced by including products from SAI Global, such as environmental management certification.

"So you can rest assured that the EFSIS brand will be retained, but only as a product brand, and you will now see SAI Global at the forefront in the food industry and beyond." ■

To find out more about SAI Global visit [www.saiglobal.com](http://www.saiglobal.com)

# Around the world

## SAI Global/EFSIS Czech Republic



SAI Global/EFSIS Czech Republic comfortably exceeded its target for the number of inspections

carried out last year. The market for inspections against the BRC Global Standard Food and the IFS is growing fast, albeit from a low base.

As you can see from the pie chart, by the end of 2006, SAI Global/EFSIS Czech Republic had a 50 per cent share of the market for evaluations against the BRC Standard, and we also hold a very

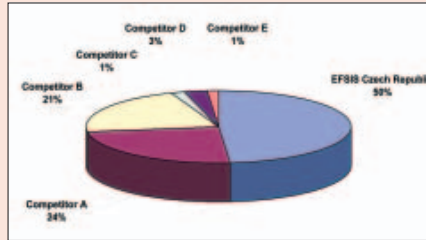
strong position in IFS and ISO22000.

Our team was strengthened by the addition of three Czech speaking evaluators who have gained the necessary approval to perform IFS and IFS Logistic audits. The importance of German retailers in the region means that growing interest in IFS certification is likely.

SAI Global/EFSIS has also issued the first EUREPGAP certificate in the Czech Republic. Our customer, Predmericka a.s., successfully passed the audit, which was

performed by an evaluator from our Spanish office. One of our Czech auditors has now successfully passed the examination which follows the EUREPGAP "Train the Trainer" course and will hopefully be undertaking EUREPGAP audits in the near future.

*Miroslav Suska*



## SAI Global/EFSIS France



2007 will represent a year of challenges for SAI Global/EFSIS France as we confirm and build on our

position as the leading food certification body.

We have built a strong reputation, based on the high level of audit services we offer to the food industry and the help we provide for our clients as they build their own quality and development strategies.

We plan to increase the number of inspections we carry out and the range of services offered to current

and new clients. We will be developing our existing team of evaluators through training and offering a wider range of products and services from the extensive SAI Global/EFSIS portfolio.

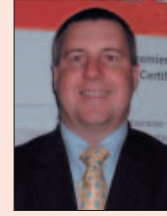
The popularity of our special conference on ISO22000 at SIAL last October showed how great the interest is in the new standard, so it will form the basis of our extended product offering. Other products that are now part of our range include the IFS Logistic standard and the BRC Storage & Distribution standard. We will also be developing a range of added value services, such as supply chain assurance which has proved to be extremely successful

with our UK customers. This is sure to be as popular in France, taking SAI Global/EFSIS in to new market territory and expanding our reach still further.

Following the success of SIAL, we are currently planning to attend more national and international trade shows, where we will be available to discuss the needs of food industry clients and offer services tailored to their current and future needs. Our next appearance will be at the MDD in Paris between March 27 and 29 so look out for SAI Global/EFSIS and find out more about our expanding range of services.

*Philippe Leveau*

## SAI Global/EFSIS Australia



“What did the pilot eat for lunch? Was it safe?” As an airline passenger, this is not a question most of us

would normally think about. However, this was a question recently asked by a major airline who turned to SAI Global to help find the answer. As a result, we have developed a Supplier Assurance programme that we will manage on behalf of the airline to ensure that the pilot's lunches are safe. This specific example is part of a growing trend in the region where food manufacturers are now starting to concentrate more closely on controlling the risks that are involved in purchasing products and services from their suppliers. And just like the airline, they are looking to SAI Global to provide expertise and experience to assist them.

Another growing trend is the increasing demand for certification to BRC and SQF. This is primarily a result of a major retailer requiring its suppliers to be certificated. There is also a benefit for local suppliers to export to retailers in other countries who mandate these standards. The good news for these suppliers is that we are integrating inspections into existing programmes, thereby reducing the physical number of visits required.

*Gary Seach*

# SIAL gets first look at the new SAI Global/EFSIS

The massive SIAL exhibition in Paris in October was the first chance for many in the world's food industry to find out at first hand about the huge expansion in the EFSIS network that has come with joining SAI Global.

“There was an overwhelmingly positive response,” says Paul Ruocco. “Although EFSIS always did provide services all over the world, a lot of new people approached us keen to learn about the much wider network of offices to which SAI Global gives us access.”

“Many of the people we met were newcomers to international

markets,” he says. “We were able to tell them that SAI Global/EFSIS can cover all their third party audit needs, including the BRC Global Standard Food, the IFS and ISO22000. We cover many of the retailer schemes food exporters need to break into particular markets as well as managing supply chains.”

SAI Global/EFSIS held a special conference on ISO22000 during the show, which was a great success. “For many people it was their first chance to find out what ISO22000 is really about,” says Paul Ruocco. “They were keen to get the right information from the

SAI Global/EFSIS experts. I am sure it helped many people to decide whether ISO22000 is right for them.”

The special ISO22000 promotion run by SAI Global/EFSIS during the show was popular. “We wanted to offer companies a chance to test the water and see if ISO22000 was suitable and useful for their business. The promotion is still running, so there is time for anyone interested to take advantage of a free pre-audit or a discount on a full assessment.”



## SAI Global/EFSIS Spain



SAI Global/EFSIS Spain has seen a sharp rise in inspections against the IFS standard after the major retail

chain Carrefour announced that it would require all its suppliers to be IFS certified over the coming months.

We can undertake BRC inspections at the same time and the Carrefour move is one reason why there has been a major increase in the number of combined BRC and IFS inspections completed by SAI Global/EFSIS Spain.

SAI Global/EFSIS Spain evaluators performed exceptionally well in the IFS exams held in Spain, clearly showing the high quality of our inspectors. We now have IFS approved Spanish inspectors covering all major food sectors.

We are also starting to see an increase in demand for ISO22000 inspections.

Our conference in Madrid at the end of November was a great success, with very positive feedback from over 150 delegates. Two major retailers, Alcampo and Eroski, presented to the conference and discussed their supplier policies and other key issues affecting the Spanish food market.

An increasing number of food businesses are relying on SAI Global/EFSIS' expertise to help them with their supplier approval. We are conducting more inspections of their suppliers using the EFSIS Safe and Legal Standard or to their own specifications.

We will shortly be offering certification to the UK Leaf scheme to fresh produce suppliers in Spain and elsewhere. This is in response to a new requirement by some UK retailers who have specified that their overseas suppliers are required to be certified not only to EUREPGAP but also to the Leaf environmental standards.

We have recently launched an on-line client satisfaction survey that we intend to roll out to all of our customers. The first results show a client satisfaction of 90 per cent which is very encouraging and demonstrates the commitment we have placed on customer care throughout the business.

*Nazario Muñoz Fernández*

## SAI Global/EFSIS Scandinavia



2006 was a good year for SAI Global/EFSIS Scandinavia. The business expanded steadily with a

20 per cent increase in BRC work, mainly in Sweden and Norway. Over 200 audits were completed, and these were mainly BRC and IFS, generating a substantial increase in income for the Scandinavian office. In October we held a seminar for our customers which proved to be extremely popular, attracting interest from all over Scandinavia.

We now have over 100 BRC-certified sites with many of these adding IFS certification to their list of approvals. We have recently certified five sites for the SAI Global/EFSIS Storage and Distribution standard with three more in the pipeline. To allow us to expand our services further, we now have our own approved evaluator, Frank Löwenadler for the certification of food packaging manufacturers to the BRC/loP Standard.

The new ISO22000 Standard has attracted a lot of interest in Scandinavia and we have been able to work with 3 companies; including Milko, a major dairy company in Sweden. Hopefully they will achieve ISO 22000 certification in March.

Besides the accredited standards we have also been undertaking a number of audits against retailers' own standards such as McDonald's food safety verification audits and supplier inspections for the Swedish/Norwegian retailer ICA.

SAI Global/EFSIS Scandinavia is a franchise operation run by the company SIK Valiguard AB. We now have new owners, Venteco plc, who are committed to injecting more resources into the company.

Venteco plc is a UK-based company and the new owners have declared "they intend enhancing the strong position in Sweden through increased marketing effort and recruitment to move the company forward into other Nordic markets. EFSIS Scandinavia has significant opportunities for further growth and we believe we can help it become the dominant certification body in the whole Nordic region".

*Torbjörn Holmberg*

## SAI Global/EFSIS Asia Pacific



The last quarter of 2006 was an exciting period for SAI Global/EFSIS Asia Pacific, with several new projects, including

audits in sectors not covered before.

We carried out a BRC preliminary audit for a client in Sri Lanka, which meant that they could start negotiations to become a supplier to Kellogg's. Being able to negotiate with international customers is a benefit our customers can take advantage of, even before they go through the full audit procedure.

SAI Global/EFSIS' Safe and Legal standard has been accepted by several big customers as a third party auditing standard for medium to small producers. Wal-Mart in Shanghai successfully used Safe and Legal for audit of a new sauce supplier in Malaysia. Thai suppliers have also started to look at how Safe and Legal can help them improve their operation and marketing. To maximize the effectiveness of the audit process and to offer the best value to customers, we often provide standard audits at the same time, to fit local requirements, such as HACCP and GMP in combination with Safe and Legal.

Our work with McDonald's in Asia continues to grow. We participated in the McDonald's APMEA Supplier Quality Assurance training in Hong Kong to gain an in-depth understanding of specific customer requirements. We then conducted McDonald's supplier audits in Malaysia, Thailand, China and Korea, and ran the first trial audits on their distribution centres in Malaysia and Korea.

We have recently expanded our capability and now undertake audits in the primary production area, as well as our more recognised work in the food processing sector. We recently conducted two FAMI-QS audits in China and are planning further audits in 2007. Our EUREPGAP audit service to customers in China and Thailand will commence in the second quarter of 2007.

Training is also a growing part of the business. We have run five training sessions and are planning many more in the coming months, covering a variety of different standards, such as BRC, IFS and ISO 22000. In February we concentrated on ISO22000 running a specific training seminar designed to give an in-depth and practical understanding to participants.

*Pirapol Klipbua*

## SAI Global/EFSIS Germany



There have been some big and exciting changes at SAI Global/EFSIS Germany in recent months.

We are pleased to welcome a new face to our team. Since the beginning of 2007 Ben Buhlmann has been with us as Technical Manager. Ben has many years of experience as an auditor, the leader of a certification body and as a consultant in the food industry.

I'm very pleased to take up this exciting new job in an organisation with truly worldwide scope. SAI Global/EFSIS will give me the best chance to use my experience in inspection and certification in the food industry to the full.

Since SAI Global/EFSIS achieved accreditation for the QS standard and Beef Labelling, that part of the

business has grown fast. A long list of customers at every stage of the supply chain from animal feed suppliers to the retail sector have already shown their confidence in SAI Global/EFSIS by arranging for us to inspect their premises.

Demand for the IFS logistics standard, which was introduced last summer, is also rising rapidly. Many of our clients are combining the new standard with audits for other standards, including for example the EU-ÖKO-VO organic standard. We have found an excellent partner for organic certification in BCS Öko-Garantie, the biggest organic certification body in the world. We attended the Biofach organic trade fair at Nuremberg on 15 to 18 February with our partners BCS, which gave the food industry a great opportunity to find out about our latest services.

*Ben Buhlmann*

# BRC success crowns Morton's Rolls drive for improvement

Morton's Rolls Ltd is a long established company, which is determined to drive up its standards. "Achieving grade A in its recent BRC inspection by SAI Global/EFSIS was a fantastic recognition for the hard work put in by everybody in the Company," says Technical Manager Azhar Arain, "but Morton's Rolls won't be resting on its laurels".

"I joined six months ago and we've been working hard towards this achievement," he continues, "everybody from the shop floor to senior management put a lot of effort into it."

"Getting an A was great, but we have to move forward, Morton's is very progressive and the focus will remain on innovation and new products."

Morton's success in its BRC inspection was just one thing and shows how the Company has changed. Morton's has been in operation, as a privately owned company, since 1965 and in 1996 it moved to an industrial site near Drumchapel in Glasgow. With the new extension which was added in 1999 it now has 60,000 square feet of processing area and

employs 250 staff, on a three shift system over seven days.

The Company has an extensive product range of fermented and morning rolls, confectionery products, including Pineapple Danish and Raspberry Danish, and some items containing cream. It produces Empire Biscuits, a Scottish speciality comprising two layers of biscuit with jam in between and icing and a cherry on the top. "They're excellent if you have a sweet tooth," says Azhar Arain.

"The majority of our production is rolls," he explains. "We make a huge range including soft rolls, crispy rolls, burger buns and hotdog rolls."

Azhar Arain believes the Company's future depends on continuous development. "What the supermarkets want is innovation," he says. "For example, we have focused on producing low salt and low fat products. We have responded to our customers' requirements by cutting salt across the range."

Morton's has also worked hard to take out hydrogenated fats. "We've spent a lot of time, effort



Seated L to R: Mhairi McCallum (QA Manager), Ian Connell (Company Chairman), Azhar Arain (Company Technical Manager)  
Standing L to R: Kevin Reynolds (Bakery Manager), Brian Stewart (Engineering Manager), Clare White (Senior Finance Manager), Kenny Laughlan (Senior Sales Manager), Jim Timmins (Operations Manager).

and resources on reformulation," he says. "We were helped by our suppliers to get products which would sell well."

"Our customers demand high quality from a plant where the systems are right," he says. "We've proved we can do it. We're determined to build on our

performance in the BRC inspection. We aim to beat the rest of the industry in every way. Our standards will go on rising." ■

For further information about Morton's Rolls, contact Azhar Arain on 0141 944 3000 or email [azharaian@moretonrolls.com](mailto:azharaian@moretonrolls.com)

# Buckingham Foods gets the first Gold in the Sandwich Sector

Buckingham Foods, one of the UK's leading manufacturers of pre-packed fresh sandwiches and snack salads, has become the first company in its sector to achieve the EFSIS GOLD award at its site in Milton Keynes.

"Buckingham Foods employs around 600 people at its Milton Keynes plant, working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to produce sandwiches for major retailers and coffee shops," explains Technical Manager, Viv Ryan.



"We have a policy of continuous improvement and we felt that EFSIS GOLD would be the ideal management tool," she says. "Although it permits a choice from its five modules, we decided to go through all of them at once. The five modules cover Operational Hygiene Systems and Standards, Risk Management, Operations Control, Customer Satisfaction and Management Training and Development.

EFSIS GOLD has helped us to find new ways of driving our standards higher," says Viv Ryan. "It's about the whole operation, not just the Technical Department. It included the Operations, Engineering and HR departments. The process included a very good crisis management exercise, which gave us some really useful insights into how to work together in the most effective way possible."

Viv Ryan believes that EFSIS

GOLD has helped create a sound basis on which Buckingham Foods can continue to drive up standards in every area of its operations. "The great advantage for us is that it is all about continuous improvement," she says. "It's not just a matter of ticking boxes. We aim to be our customers' first choice supplier of quality sandwiches. EFSIS GOLD is helping us to make sure we go on achieving that aim."

"EFSIS GOLD is the ideal management tool for a company like Buckingham Foods who are prepared to invest the time in looking at the way their operations function in real food industry situations and use what they see to continue to drive significant improvements," says EFSIS Food Director Carole Payne. "On behalf of SAI Global/EFSIS, I'd like to congratulate Buckingham Foods on a magnificent achievement in attaining the GOLD Award" ■

## SAI GLOBAL/EFSIS finalises programme of training courses

“A first for EFSIS but now through the SAI Global/EFSIS relationship we are able to offer an exciting range of food specific training courses for our clients,” Carole Payne explained. SAI Global has a well developed range of training courses which are available throughout the world. This service can now be provided to our current clients.

“Whether you are interested in specific standards or in quality systems we are able to provide a solution to your training needs. We will be offering two day internal auditor courses, five day lead assessor courses or if your interest is in quality management systems then there is a course entitled “Demystifying 9000.”

In addition to our specific knowledge and expertise in the

area of BRC standards and as an Approved Training Provider, we can offer the full range of courses, including Awareness Training for BRC Global Standard Food Issue 4, Global Standard Packaging Issue 2, Consumer Products standard and HACCP. Of a particular topical nature is a course on the requirements of the new BRC Global standard for Storage and Distribution, which SAI Global/EFSIS is well placed to offer as we have in-depth knowledge in this area gained from our three years of operating an accredited storage and distribution standard. ■

*Dates are being finalised for the above courses so check the website for final details, but please register your interest now on [www.efsis.com](http://www.efsis.com).*

## GFSI – Global Food Safety initiative 6th Annual International Conference, Munich

The 6th annual GFSI International Conference held in Munich in February covered a wide variety of food safety issues ranging from traceability to nutrition and obesity. This event organised by CIES – the international retailer organisation, was attended by over 500 delegates from 43 countries. A full range of stakeholders were represented, including retailers from around the world, plus



accreditation bodies, certification bodies, standard owners, food suppliers and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), plus our own UK Food Standards Agency, the FSA. CIES Global Food Safety Initiative, is a non-profit foundation that seeks to harmonise existing food safety standards across the world and foster continuous improvement at a global level.

The event took place over two days and high on the agenda was the call for one common food safety standard. There was a strong feeling that there is a need for ongoing convergence of different food safety standards from around the world under the guidance of CIES Global Food Safety Initiative.

EFSIS has been heavily involved with the GFSI and indeed Carole Payne was appointed to the Technical Committee of GFSI last year. She has been working on the review of the GFSI benchmarking document and in particular on the requirements of GFSI benchmarked standards in relation to auditor competency.

The proposals are due to be finalised by the GFSI in the coming months and will then form part of the revised benchmarking document for GFSI standards. This will ensure that agreed requirements for education and professional qualifications, work experience and formal auditor training procedures are adopted by all the GFSI Standards. It was universally agreed that it is vitally important that auditors are highly competent, with in-depth knowledge of the categories of the food industry in which they operate. It is hoped that there will ultimately be one training procedure for all standards rather than the current complex and diverse arrangements. ■

*We will give an update in the next edition of the newsletter once the requirements are finalised.*

## Philippe Leveau SAI Global/EFSIS European Operations General Manager



Philippe Leveau is someone a lot of people in SAI Global/EFSIS are going to be getting to know better over the next few

months. After four years with SAI Global/EFSIS France, during which time he has been the driving force behind the Company's dramatic growth, Philippe is set to take his experience and ideas to a much wider audience as the new SAI Global/EFSIS European Operations General Manager.

Philippe set up the Company in 2000 after 15 years working in the food industry, but the breakthrough was first a franchise agreement to carry out inspections under the EFSIS banner. It was soon to become a

full part of the EFSIS organisation.

As European Operations General Manager, Philippe Leveau aims to apply the French experience in other countries in mainland Europe. “Some of the countries, Spain, for example, have been very successful, but we believe there is more scope for growth,” he says. “I’ll be looking in particular at Germany. There is huge potential to build SAI Global/EFSIS there.”

A background which combines technical expertise with a proven track record in business development at national and international level makes him ideal for the new role. “My job in the food industry was developing the export business for French companies,” he says. “That was how I got to know about certification. I also set up international agreements between

companies.” That took Philippe around the world, and included managing a dairy plant in Japan.

Some of the biggest French retailers are highly active in other European countries and Philippe aims to use his French contacts to help SAI Global/EFSIS offices elsewhere in Europe. “I spend a lot of time trying to sell to European retailers,” he says. “I know all of them. That’s knowledge I can bring to the local offices which are already successful.”

He believes it is vital to know your market. “Think global, act local,” he says. “Be open-minded to the local country.”

“I’m a big rugby fan,” he says. “A crazy one.” He is President of the Limoges rugby club l’Union Sportive et Athlétique de Limoges. “A French victory in the Rugby World Cup would be just about perfect.” ■

## Note from the Editor

If you would like to be in a future issue of the newsletter or have an opinion or product you would like to share with SAI Global/EFSIS and its customers, please contact Paul Ruocco on + 44 (0)1908 249922, or email at [info@efsis.com](mailto:info@efsis.com). Alternatively, write to PO Box 44, Winterhill House, Snowdon Drive, Milton Keynes, MK6 1AX. You can also visit the website at [www.efsis.com](http://www.efsis.com).



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