

Food Fraud Vulnerability Assessment guide to use

The Food Fraud Vulnerability Assessment (FFVA) tool is an electronic diagnostic to enable companies to assess their vulnerability to food fraud.

The diagnostic tool can be utilised on a company wide basis as well on a single product line, region or facility.

Companies may wish to have multiple sites, geographies or product lines conduct multiple assessments and consolidate the results to identify risks and vulnerabilities as appropriate across their company.

The decision on where to apply the diagnostic tool and why will be company specific, and will clearly vary across companies and the geographies in which they operate and the inherent complexity of their supply chains.

The following guide is a useful flowchart to assist companies determine areas of focus and possible aspects of an operation to commence the food fraud vulnerability assessment.

It is important to note that the diagnostic tool is not designed to detect or identify food fraud within a company rather its purpose is to assist a company assess their vulnerability to food fraud.

As a consequence the judgement of the user is crucial to ensure the assessment is answered appropriately. Where necessary allocate responsibility for the completion of part or all of the diagnostic tool to other individuals within the company who have the requisite knowledge or expertise.

To place food fraud in context we provide a definition of food fraud as follows...

Food Fraud

A collective term encompassing the deliberate and intentional substitution, addition, tampering, or misrepresentation of food, food ingredients or food packaging, labelling, product information, or false/misleading statements made about a product for economic gain.

Examples:

- Horsemeat in ground beef
- Peanut corporation selling known contaminated product
- Diluted or extra virgin olive oil
- Melamine in pet food and infant formula
- Unauthorised unsanitary repackaging (up-labelling or origin-laundering)
- Expired product date code tampering or 'refreshing'
- Cargo theft reintroduced into stolen products

Terminology

Food fraud



Mislabelling

- Expiry, provenance (unsafe origin) Toxic Japanese star anise labelled as Chinese star anise
- Mislabelled recycled cooking oil



Dilution

- Watered down products using non-potable/unsafe water
- Olive oil diluted with potentially toxic tree oil



Concealment

- Poultry injected with hormones to conceal diseases
- Harmful food colouring applied to fresh fruit to cover defects



Counterfeiting

- Copies of popular foods – not produced with acceptable safety assurances



Substitution

- Sunflower oil partially substituted with mineral oil
- Hydrolysed leather protein in milk



Unapproved enhancements

- Melamine added to enhance protein value
- Use of unauthorised additives (Sudan dyes in spices)



Grey market production/theft/diversion

- Sales of excess unreported product
- Loss of royalties or brand payments

Source: The Global Food Safety Initiative, Food Fraud Think Tank Presentations, GFSI

Initial assessment

Areas of possible focus

