

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**UNUSUAL MEASURE FOR FOOD-CHEMICAL SUPPLIER?  
Company Goes Beyond the Call of Safety, Gets SQF Certification**

NAMPA, Idaho, Nov. 1, 2012 - When industry leaders founded the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), it was a bold step toward self-regulated industry reform. Now, a unique company that specializes in chemicals for the food industry, BHS Specialty Chemical Products, is embracing that movement - and taking it in a whole new direction.

When BHS was recently awarded the food-safety recognition of SQF Certification, a standard backed by GSFI, it may have raised some eyebrows among the industry. After all, few of their fellow food-grade chemical distributors have followed suit. According to Phil Johnson, BHS Chairman and CEO, this measure of safety certification is “far from the norm” for his industry. “There aren’t many chemical suppliers who have gone to this extent. We may be five or ten years ahead of our time.” BHS is now among a minority of manufacturers, estimated at less than 5%, who are SQF Level 2000 Certified for food-grade ingredient manufacturing, sanitation and distribution.

First, a bit of background: The GSFI was not created to regulate the food industry, it was created to help the industry regulate itself. This non-profit entity, formed in 2000, was designed to create a global standard for food safety methodologies, and to prevent redundant (and expensive) food safety audits. Third-party organizations would be encouraged to develop safety-standard programs to meet GFSI benchmarks; once officially recognized by the GFSI, these third-party entities would be allowed to conduct safety audits of companies in the food industry, granting certification to those that pass muster.

The Safe Quality Food Program (SQF) is one such standard. According to the SQF Institute, theirs is the only certification program outside Europe recognized by the GFSI, the standards of which have been embraced by several major U.S. food outlets including Target, Costco and Safeway. It is a comprehensive risk-based food safety program designed to reduce the incidence of unsafe food reaching the marketplace.

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The SQF Institute provides two distinctions, based on the type of food supplier that is being certified: Primary producers, such as farmers, may be certified as SQF 1000. Manufacturers and distributors like BHS can earn the SQF 2000 certification. And although participation in such safety programs is 100% voluntary, many of the big-name food outlets now require their vendors to be certified by some type of GFSI-recognized program. Based on this, it's quite possible that participation will eventually become a virtual requirement for companies throughout the food industry, both in the U.S. and around the world.

However, it's not easy or inexpensive to earn certification. For many companies, it means extensive modifications to manufacturing processes or to factory infrastructures. So why would a relatively small company like BHS be so quick to jump on the bandwagon? It's just one more way that they are leading the future of the industry. From their unique business model, which embraces all aspects of the business from manufacturing to delivery, to their industry-changing developments, such as technology that will allow for real-time digital analysis of chemical samples, it's all part of a strategy that forces competitors to play catch-up. "We're moving the cheese," Johnson says with a grin.

For now, food manufacturers who intend to seek some type of GFSI-recognized certification would do well to source the food-grade ingredients, sanitizers and other chemical products they need from a certified source such as BHS. That's because SQF standards encourage the flow of quality and safety both upstream and down; manufacturers who use certified suppliers will have an easier process of becoming certified themselves.

#### About BHS Specialty Chemicals

BHS offers a complete spectrum of products and services to satisfy the chemical requirements of food manufacturers and other industries. An SQF 2000 Level II Certified Company, BHS provides chemicals approved and controlled for use in food manufacturing plants. Since 1998 the company has grown to become a prominent member of the chemical supplier industry. To learn more, visit <http://www.BHSpécialtychemicals.com>

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