



Team-building and training at BRCGS conferences

In 2018, the Product Safety Team from Chase Global Foods Inc. attended Food Safety Americas and the BRCGS Academy Risk Assessment course running alongside the conference in Nashville, Tennessee, as a team-building event.

Was this the first time delegates from Chase Global Foods Inc. attended Food Safety Americas and BRCGS Academy training as a group?

This was the first time **Chase Global Foods Inc.** attended Food Safety Americas, but we had previously attended HACCP and Agents and Brokers Issue 2: Understanding the Requirements for Sites training conducted in-house by a BRCGS Approved Training Partner. More recently we'd also attended training sessions on Root Cause Analysis and Validation and Verification.

What made you decide on Food Safety Americas 2018 and the associated Risk Assessment training course as the venue for your team-building event?

We had heard about Food Safety Americas 2018 while we were working towards certification to BRCGS' Agents and Brokers Standard, which was achieved in January 2018.

We felt strongly this would be a good platform for a team-building event while immersed in food safety culture and learning how we could improve delivery of safe food, quality and legality to our valued customers.

As the **Global Standard for Agents and Brokers** is fairly new, we also had hopes of meeting other agents and brokers to discuss challenges, solutions, share information and expand our knowledge.

We had already attended in-house training from the highly accredited and respected BRCGS Approved Training Partner, **Nena Velickovic**. Nena had shown herself to be very well-versed in all levels of the food supply chain, as well as a very interactive and patient educator.

Therefore, we felt it would be a great opportunity to attend the **Risk Assessment** training course to expand our team's knowledge with this important information while surrounded by peers from other certificated sites across the BRCGS Standards. Evidence of the effectiveness of this approach is that two of our staff achieved the highest marks in the class.

What additional benefits did attending the conference and training bring to your team-building event?

We felt we gained more knowledge and insight into the BRCGS certification program across all the different Standards and were able to utilize that knowledge to fill in the gaps for our day-to-day practices.

We were able to:

- connect with BRCGS team members including the Technical Manager for the Agents and Brokers Standard;
- meet vendors who would be able to provide services and software to our business;
- meet with some of our key quality and technical advisors from our key principals; and
- develop a stronger sense of a team within our Product Safety Team.

The sessions offered were very informative and we were able to take the knowledge back to the rest of the Chase Global Foods Team.



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Would you do it again?

Yes, we have booked tickets for our team to attend **Food Safety Americas 2019**, and will possibly attend the **Internal Auditor** course running alongside the event.

We would be looking to attend as many BRCGS conferences as possible; schedule and budget permitting.

We have also communicated our thoughts regarding the benefits of attending the conference to our industry colleagues.



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Have you previously done this with other events and/or training courses?

As we're a growing company with a limited number of employees, it isn't generally feasible to have so many staff members – including three department heads and the president – away from the office all at once. Our president felt strongly that a BRCGS conference should be the exception to the rule.

What did the team from Chase Global Foods enjoy most about the conference?

Our team enjoyed:

- gaining additional food safety knowledge through the event sessions;
- meeting the various sponsors and exploring their products and services;
- establishing and/or reinforcing connections within the BRCGS community; and
- the ability to confer with key BRCGS team members who were very approachable, such as John Figgins, Technical Specialist – Food, and Antony Harrison, Head of Digital Services, who is working on the new BRCGS Directory.

Because of our attendance at the conference we have the opportunity to work with a new supplier.

Even the planned 'fun' event was an opportunity to network, and we were also able to taste a new source of protein: crickets served over a bed of popcorn!

What did the team take away from the BRCGS Academy training?

Risk Assessment should be an imperative and integral part of any food safety program!

Specific to Chase Global Foods, who doesn't warehouse nor touch product directly, we must ensure the product safety, legality and quality through vetting the products themselves, suppliers and suppliers of service. This crucial protocol starts with, and is maintained through, risk assessment.

Any other comments?

During all our training received to date, we found most of the BRCGS training material and testing has quite often 'catered' to the manufacturing standard. Our Approved Training Partner, Nena, is very well-versed in all industries, so was able to guide us to greater understanding.

We hope that by submitting course feedback and mentioning how it would be beneficial to include the other Standards, it will facilitate a greater understanding of the important role of Agents and Brokers in the food supply chain.

Certification to the Global Standard for Agents and Brokers is still relatively new, and one of a kind in the food safety certification world. We hope by attending and advertising that Agents and Brokers have an important voice and role in the supply chain, it will encourage other Agents and Brokers to take the important step to become certificated, thereby helping build a stronger team atmosphere with the manufacturers to ensure the safest and best quality of product to consumers.



Comments from [Nena Velickovic](#), Principal Consultant at NV Consulting and BRCGS Consultant and Approved Training Partner, who delivered the Risk Assessment training course and was involved with Chase Global Foods bringing their team to the event:

It was a great pleasure to support the [BRCGS Academy](#) team as well as introduce the Chase Global Foods Team to the BRCGS team at the conference.

It's been a great experience for me to guide the Chase Global Foods Team through development of their Product Safety and Quality Management Program against BRCGS' Agents and Brokers Standard.

The level of food safety culture and awareness at Chase Global Foods is amazing and still growing. The team is eager to be engaged and involved with the global BRCGS community, and I thought it would be a great team-building opportunity to experience Food Safety Americas that way.