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Fighting Food Fraud: Intelligence and Common Cents

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Since the melamine in milk and horsemeat in lasagna scandals, awareness about Food Fraud among food consumers is slowly starting to increase. The response to these cases has done little to deter those who commit Food Fraud. Food Fraud is occurring with even greater frequency in many, if not most of the largest food producing countries in the world.

Unfortunately, testing for known adulterants, creating new standards, conducting audits, awarding certifications, delivering speeches and giving presentations about Food Fraud are doing nothing to solve the problem. If we don't know what we are looking for, the unknown is almost impossible to find. Testing may indicate the existence of a problem, but in most cases, technology is not advanced or focused enough to tell us exactly what the problem is, where it is occurring and who the culprit is. Additionally, testing every product and ingredient is not feasible, economically or physically. European governments have spent millions of Euros/Pounds testing for horsemeat and creating new initiatives and standards to address Food Fraud. The bottom line is that European food consumers are no safer than they were before the horsemeat scandal. For those of us who live outside of Europe, we are no more immune from Food Fraud than the Europeans. Food Fraud touches almost every single person on this planet.

The challenge with combatting Food Fraud is not what we know about it, but rather what we don't know. Consumers have no idea as to the scope of Food Fraud. When you consider the total number of ingredients that you consume in a single day, and when you consider where those

ingredients come from, the problem with Food Fraud may suddenly cause you to be more concerned. Do you have any idea how many people handle food ingredients before they touch your tongue? Do you know where those ingredients come from? Do you know anything about the conditions in which those ingredients were grown, harvested, processed, stored, packaged or transported? Are you aware of the infinite number of substances that are not fit for human or animal consumption that find their way into the food that you and I eat every single day of our lives? Do you really understand how these ingredients are affecting your overall health?

Laws and penalties in Western countries that import food ingredients do nothing to deter the food fraudsters. Standards that attempt to prevent Food Fraud are ineffective because of the inherent difficulties in enforcing those standards across multiple complex supply chains in foreign jurisdictions. Certifications are meaningless unless they can be proven for every single food ingredient in every single food product sold, a statistical impossibility.

Food Fraud can only be effectively combatted with two tools: solid intelligence followed by economic sanctions (where necessary). Intelligence gathering about food supply chains is incredibly difficult, yet critical to effectively fighting Food Fraud. Without the raw intelligence about Food Fraud, it cannot and will never be stopped. Economic sanctions imposed by those who purchase and sell food either as their business is an imperative and frankly the only approach to combat Food Fraud. Food Fraud is often referred to as Economically Motivated Adulteration (EMA). If producers and

distributors of food and food ingredients limit their purchases to those suppliers who are regularly verified to be secure all the way down the supply chain to the source of those ingredients, and all the way up the supply chain to the point of sale, and if consumers solely purchase from companies who follow this approach, Food Fraud will be drastically reduced. The solution is to deter economically motivated adulteration and the only way to do so is to eliminate the financial incentives that motivate adulteration. Putting it another way, let's hit the fraudsters where it counts, in the pocketbook.

INSCATECH is a Food Fraud intelligence gathering and supply chain vulnerability control company. The only company in the world that can determine if Food Fraud is being committed, INSCATECH identifies where Food Fraud is occurring, who is doing it, when it is happening and how it is being done. We gather the intelligence and use it to help commercial purchasers of food products make informed and smart decisions regarding their purchases, and we help them to secure their supply chains to prevent future occurrences of Food Fraud. Our mission is to keep every single consumer of food as safe as possible.



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