

Food Safety and Security Is Top of Mind for Consumers

New global study from Mars Global Food Safety Center finds consumers believe food safety and security is a top global issue

BEIJING (October 14, 2020) – At Mars we are committed to tackling the most significant food security challenges facing global food supply chains, starting with food safety. Food safety applies across every step of the supply chain from farm to fork. We invest in global research advancing knowledge in areas of critical food safety challenges, rethinking where and how we buy our raw materials and we are innovating to drive positive change for people and the planet. We invest in this area because we believe everyone has the right to safe food, and because food safety matters to people around the world.

In fact, according to a new study¹ from the Mars Global Food Safety Center (GFSC) that surveyed more than 1,750 people in the U.S., U.K. and China, more than half of respondents (52 percent) feel food safety is a top three (3) global issue – and 77 percent think it’s a top 10 global issue. Food insecurity has only been exacerbated by COVID-19, and 73 percent of respondents believe the novel coronavirus will impact the viability of the global supply chain and 71 percent believe it will have impact on global access to food. These consumers think about food safety and security as much as climate change (39 percent) and pollution (38 percent).

“New food safety threats, like those posed by COVID-19, are constantly emerging through a combination of factors including global warming, increased globalization of trade, as well as changes in agriculture practices and food production,” said David Crean, Mars Chief Science Officer and Vice President of Corporate R&D. “We believe everyone has a right to safe food and it’s also our responsibility to share our knowledge (82 percent of survey respondents expressed their desire to learn more), expertise and tools to enable safe food for all.”

Mars Continues to Raise the Bar on Food Safety

This year marks the 5th anniversary of the Mars Global Food Safety Center, a state-of-the-art research and training facility based in Beijing that’s designed to tackle the most significant food safety challenges facing the planet today. The first of its kind facility aims to harness the power of international collaboration with a network of global partners and operational insights from Mars sites around the world to raise the bar on food safety and help ensure safe food for all.

“We’re very proud of our efforts over the first five years – which included welcoming visitors from around the world, hosting high-profile global food safety symposiums and training events and establishing peer-reviewed research programs in three crucial areas of food safety. We also recognize there is significant work to be done in the years ahead,” added Dr. Guangtao Zhang, Acting Director and Head of Research, Mars Global Food Safety Center.

The Mars Global Food Safety Center has set ambitious targets in three critical areas of food safety:

¹ KRC Research conducted the Mars Food Safety and Security survey using an online survey of n=1,754 adults ages 18 to 65. Respondents include a total of n=502 United States; n=502 United Kingdom; n=750 China. The study fielded between September 11-20, 2020.

1. **Mycotoxin risk management:** developing novel partnerships and breakthrough management strategies to tackle mycotoxin head on; starting with aflatoxins – because of the serious health threat they pose, particularly in the developing world.
2. **Microbial risk management:** driving research and collaboration to move towards faster detection, identification and, ultimately, a predictive approach.
3. **Food integrity:** developing tools and capabilities to mitigate food integrity challenges across the food industry and the global food supply chain.

Each of these areas align with consumer concerns identified in the survey – 60 percent of respondents expressed concerned about keeping food safe from toxins, as well as bacteria, and 58 percent are concerned about preventing food fraud.

Survey respondents also expressed the importance for government and private organizations like the GFSC to continue to focus on preventing food safety issues (85 percent), to invest in early detection programs (84 percent) and to manage global food safety (80 percent).

At Mars, we believe the world we want tomorrow starts with how we do business today. As a family-owned business we have the freedom to think in generations, not quarters, so we can invest in the long-term future of our business, our people and the planet. We know this is important to not only our business, but our consumers. This will be especially important as the “rising generation” (18-34) are particularly attuned to food safety through technology and an increasingly globalized economy. That is why the Mars GFSC will continue to invest, explore and develop science and technology solutions to help address the most pressing challenges facing the global food supply chain, strengthening our factory networks and building our laboratory capabilities in the years to come.

For more information about the recent study or the Mars Global Food Safety Center visit <https://gfsc.mars.com>.

To download an infographic with facts from the survey visit [here](#). For videos around our [people and partners](#) and our [science](#), visit our YouTube channel.

About the Mars Global Food Safety Center

At Mars, we believe everyone has the right to safe food. In September 2015, Mars opened the Mars Global Food Safety Center (GFSC), a state-of-the-art research and training facility based in Beijing, China, designed to help tackle the most significant food safety challenges facing the planet today.

The first of its kind, the facility aims to harness the power of international collaboration with a network of global partners and operational insights from Mars sites around the world, to raise the bar on food safety and help ensure safe food for all. World-leading scientists conduct pre-competitive, original research at the Center using cutting edge approaches, which are shared through scientific publications and forums. The Center has set ambitious targets in three critical areas of food safety: mycotoxin risk management, microbial risk management, and food integrity (including areas such as food fraud).

About Mars, Incorporated

For more than a century, Mars, Incorporated has been driven by the belief that the world we want tomorrow starts with how we do business today. This idea is at the center of who we have always been as a global, family-owned business. Today, Mars is transforming, innovating and evolving in ways that affirm our commitment to making a positive impact on the world around us.

Across our diverse and expanding portfolio of confectionery, food, and petcare products and services, we employ 133,000 dedicated Associates who are all moving in the same direction: forward. With \$40 billion in annual sales, we produce some of the world's best-loved brands including DOVE®, EXTRA®, M&M's®, MILKY WAY®, SNICKERS®, TWIX®, ORBIT®, PEDIGREE®, ROYAL CANIN®, SKITTLES®, BEN'S ORIGINAL™, WHISKAS®, COCOAVIA®, and 5™; and take care of half of the world's pets through our pet health services AniCura, Banfield Pet Hospitals™, BluePearl®, Linnaeus, Pet Partners™, and VCA™.

We know we can only be truly successful if our partners and the communities in which we operate prosper as well. The Mars Five Principles – Quality, Responsibility, Mutuality, Efficiency and Freedom – inspire our Associates to take action every day to help create a world tomorrow in which the planet, its people and pets can thrive.

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