

Global Governance in Food Safety: A Study on the reasons of evolving and ongoing criticisms of Private Food Standard Initiatives

Mr. Jannatul Islam,

Abstract

Food safety usually refers to compliance with health or safety standards as determined. If the food has adverse effects on our health when we prepare, use, eat or serve then generally is called unsafe food. Regulatory initiatives emerged primarily to address the rapidly decaying public trust in modern global food chain, complicated by many factors including the globalization of economic activities, advancements in food science and transportation technology, the multi-nationalization of the food industry, and the advent of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 (Wouters et al, 2008). But consumers' are concerned with the prevailing mechanisms of food safety control (Henson & Caswell, 1999), as a result, alternative mechanisms in global food safety governance emerged. This trend of alternative mechanism expedited the growing influence of private regulators such as multi-national food companies, supermarket chains and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Due to the growth of private standards, a debate is emerging which focuses on their relation with international trade law. Private standards may represent barriers to the trading of a number of products and may therefore run counter to international trade rules. Some critics even claim that private standards are challenging the legitimacy of established multilateral trade institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO, 2005). The study is introducing the global food safety governance and presenting the reasons for the emergence and criticisms of private institutions in food safety standard governance in the global food safety arena.