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Shuster Laboratories’ “Global Sourcing Quality Management™” Program Helps the Private Label Industry Improve Supply Chain Quality Worldwide

Canton, MA, October 26, 2007 – As quality issues with products sourced in China continue to make headlines, retailers are reevaluating their private label supply chain channels from a heightened safety perspective. Shuster Laboratories’ “Global Sourcing Quality Management™” (GSQM) program helps retailers and manufacturers that source products or raw materials in China, or other offshore locations, ensure the highest level of confidence in their products and systems.

“Recent quality and safety issues with products sourced in China have amplified concern among the industry and consumers. If a retailer or manufacturer is buying raw materials or products overseas, directly or through an agent, then they must have a program in place to ensure product quality and safety at all critical points in the supply chain,” said Dr. Kaveh Afshar, Chief Operating Officer of Shuster Laboratories.

Shuster’s Global Sourcing Quality Management program includes:

- **Gap Analysis** – A gap analysis is conducted to identify possible risks in a company’s supply chain. The analysis includes supplier evaluation and qualification; product and raw material evaluation; identification of sampling plan; assessment of cGMP compliance and HACCP plan as required; and identification of current accreditations, certifications, and registrations.
- **Product/Ingredient Testing** – Analytical, microbiological, and pesticide screening to identify suspected products.
- **Plant/Facility/Factory Audits** – Implementation of an inspection and auditing program to assess and monitor quality systems management.
- **Sourcing/Traceability Programs** – Development of a comprehensive sourcing and traceability program allows companies to manage sourcing risks.
- **HACCP Programs** – Incorporation of HACCP into a company’s food safety program can help reduce and manage risk.
- **cGMP Programs** – Assistance with implementing cGMPs throughout the manufacturing process.

Shuster and its parent company STR work with retailers and manufacturers to provide supply chain risk assessment services for a wide range of consumable packaged goods such as food, dietary supplements, and health and beauty aids, and hard and soft consumer products such as toys/toy premiums, housewares, and apparel.

“The first critical step for companies is to conduct a risk assessment. From there, they can build an effective safety program to ensure that the quality and safety requirements for sourced raw materials and products are consistently being met. Relying on vendor certificates of analysis or reputation is not adequate,” said Dr. Afshar. “With a gap analysis, we can figure out what needs to be done and develop a plan that is cost effective. Whatever the outcome, the cost of not evaluating your company’s risk is higher than identifying potential problems and fixing them.”

Shuster Laboratories, a Specialized Technology Resources (STR) company, is an independent provider of quality assurance testing, product development, and supply chain support services for a cross section of consumer product industries. STR, a privately held, U.S. owned company, is strategically located throughout the world in over 30 countries and on five continents. The STR Group Companies provide testing, audit, inspection, and responsible sourcing services and help ensure that clients have the highest level of confidence in the quality, safety, and social standards of their products and systems.

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