FOOD SAFETY TIPS

What is Food Safety?

FOOD SAFETY is about handling, preparing, and storing of food to reduce the risk of consumers becoming sick from food-borne diseases. In practicing food safety, different hazards can be prevented such as biological, chemical, or physical agents in food, or the condition of food, with the potential to cause chronic or acute illness, and in severe cases may lead to hospitalization, absence from work, and sometimes death.

FIVE KEYS TO SAFER FOOD	SAFETY FOR CONSUMERS	SAFETY FOR VENDORS
Keep Clean ✓ *Wash your hands before handling food.* ✓ *Wash your hands after going to the toilet.* ✓ *Wash and sanitize all surfaces and equipment before food preparation.* ✓ *Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests, rats, and other animals.* **Separate Raw and Cooked** ✓ *Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods.* ✓ *Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods.* ✓ *Store food in containers to avoid contact between raw and cooked food.*	**Check Expiration Dates on Food Labels** ✓ ***Best Before (BB)*** *– means it can be consumed before the stated date.* ✓ ***"Sell By"*** *– how long a grocery store can display that food item.* ✓ *Don't eat any food that is past its* ***"use – by"*** *date.* ✓ ***MMDDYY*** *on a food label is a code where* ***MM*** *refers to the month,* ***DD*** *refers to the date and* ***YY*** *refers to the year.* **Self-Protection and Vigilance** ✓ *Avoid buying and consuming food without labels.* ✓ *Never buy cans or glass jars with dents, cracks, or bulging lids.* ✓ *Check for cleanliness and hygiene practices of food preparation areas before buying.*	**Improve Safety When Handling and Preparing Food** ✓ *Use only portable water for drinking, cooking and making ice.* ✓ *Don't reuse water used for washing utensils, food or hands.* ✓ *Avoid direct and indirect contact between raw and cooked or prepared foods which will be consumed without heating.* **Transporting, handling and Storage** ✓ *Keep the vehicle used for transporting of prepared foods clean and do not carry animals.* ✓ *Minimize the time required to transport food from where it is prepared to where it is sold.* ✓ *Keep prepared foods hot at a temperature of above 60 Degrees Celsius.*

Cook Thoroughly

✓ Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, eggs and seafood.
✓ Bring food like soups and stews to boiling to make sure that they have reached 70 Degrees Celsius.
✓ Reheat cooked food thoroughly.

Keep Food at Safe Temperatures

✓ Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
✓ Refrigerate promptly all cooked and perishable food, preferably below 5 Degrees Celsius.
✓ Keep cooked food piping hot (more than 60 degrees Celsius) before serving.
✓ Do not store food for too long even in the refrigerator.
✓ Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature.

Use Safe Water and Raw Materials

✓ Use safe water or treat it to make it safe.
✓ Select fresh and wholesome foods.
✓ Wash fruits and vegetables especially if eaten raw.
✓ Do not use food beyond its expiry date.

✓ Keep abreast of developments in food safety and practice the necessary safety requirements when handling, preparing and storing your food.

✓ Keep prepared foods cold at less than 5 Degrees Celsius.
✓ Reduce the time that food is displayed and keep it protected from dust and out of consumers' reach.
✓ Don't keep leftovers until the next day if cold storage is not available.

Compliance with Rules and Regulations

✓ Food preparation areas must be clean and hygienic.
✓ Equipment used in food preparation must be in good condition and cleaned effectively.
✓ Water that is used for food preparation must be of drinking quality.
✓ Staff handling food must practice good hygiene and avoid any potential contamination of food.
✓ Staff must be adequately trained in food hygiene.
✓ Food waste must be removed from the food preparation areas as soon as possible and must be stored in containers for waste disposal purposes.
✓ Design measures to prevent pests from contaminating food both in storage and in preparation.