



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization



# Food safety is everyone's business in street food vending

## The importance of food safety

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An estimated 2.5 billion people eat street food worldwide every day. It provides a source of inexpensive, convenient and in some cases nutritious meals, attractive and varied foods for tourists and a source of income for a vast number of people, particularly women.

While street foods are appreciated for their unique flavours and convenience, they are also often perceived to be a major public health risk due to unsafe food handling.

Lack of knowledge among street food vendors about the causes of foodborne diseases is a major public health risk factor. Interventions at all government levels are required to ensure that the standard of safety for such foods is the best attainable in the local situation.



# What are the benefits of taking action for food safety?

## FOR VENDORS

- Improved preparation practices and business;
- Improved product quality;
- Consumer trust leading to higher sales;
- Greater market access and higher earning potential;
- Safer working environment.

## FOR CONSUMERS

- Access to safer and more nutritious food;
- Better health and nutritional status for themselves and their families.

## How to improve food safety

### STREET FOOD VENDORS

**Use** only potable water for drinking, cooking and making ice. Don't reuse water used for washing utensils, food or hands.

**Separate** raw and cooked food. Avoid direct and indirect contact between raw and cooked or prepared foods which will be consumed without heating.

**When** transporting, handling and storing prepared foods:

- Keep the vehicle used for transport 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 to facilitate:
  - keeping prepared foods hot at a temperature of above 60°C;
  - keeping prepared foods cold at less than 5°C (on ice or in a fridge).
- Reduce the time that food is displayed and keep it protected from dust and out of consumers reach.
- Cook foods thoroughly to at least 70°C. When reheating, keep food at 70°C for two minutes. Don't keep leftovers until the next day if cold storage is unavailable.

- Keep vending units, equipment and utensils clean and covered and sanitize surfaces.
- Wash hands with soap and clean water and wear clean clothing.

### AUTHORITIES

**Ensure** the supply of water is of acceptable quality and in sufficient quantities for drinking, washing, cleaning and cooking, for example from a central system or a hand pump.

**Provide** training for street vendors and ongoing education as well as educate consumers who, through their purchasing power, provide a strong motivating force to improve the safety of street-vended food.

**Educate** consumers on the importance of picking vendors that ensure food safety.

**On World Food Safety Day (7 June), use posters to increase knowledge of food safety practices; organize visual displays and handouts featuring food safety literature, recipes and education materials.**