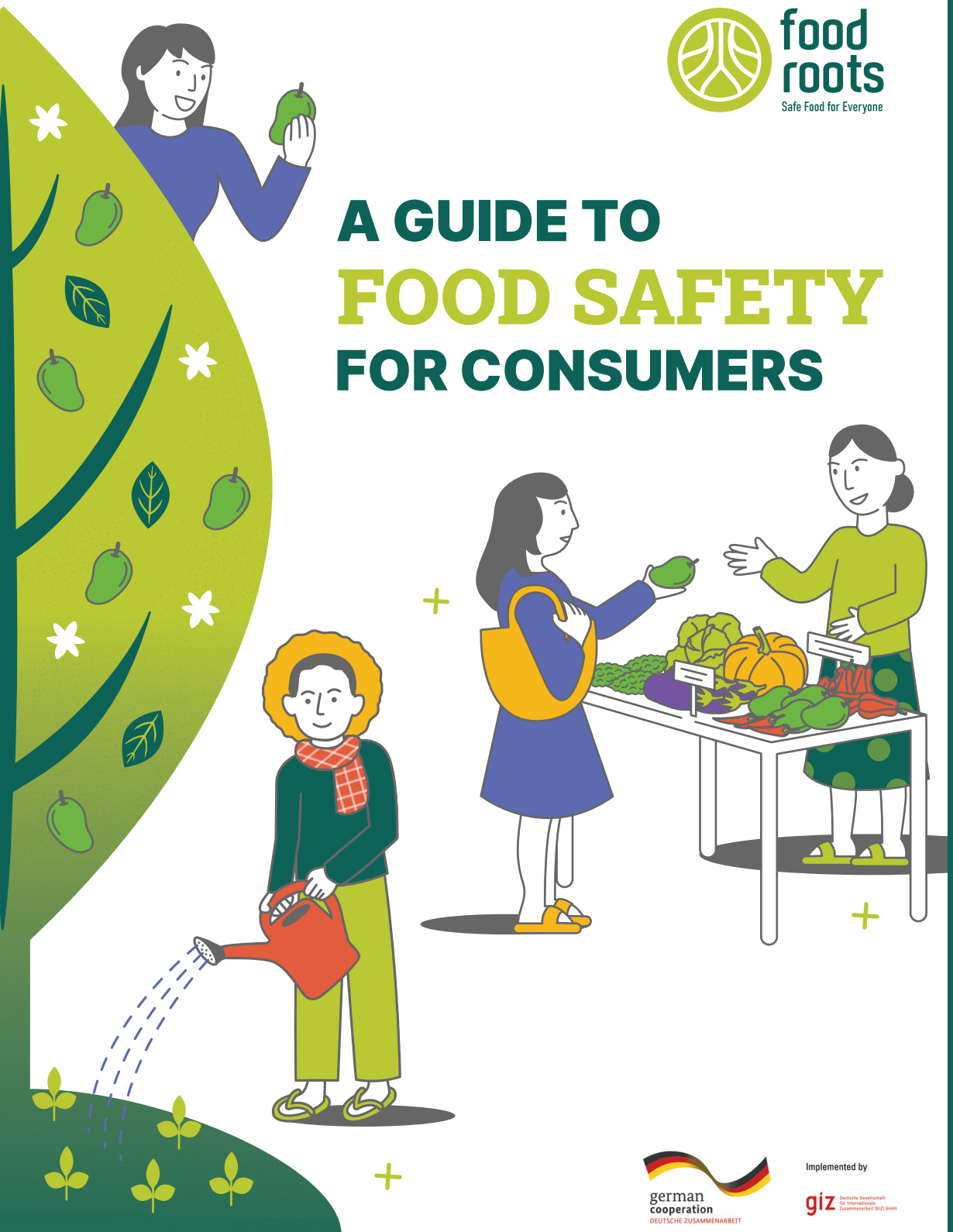




**food
roots**
Safe Food for Everyone

A GUIDE TO FOOD SAFETY FOR CONSUMERS



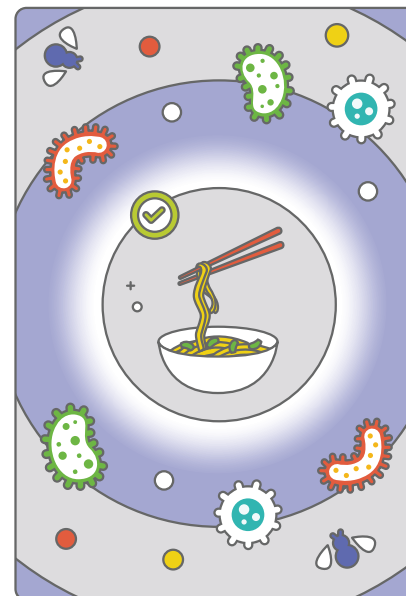
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FOOD SAFETY



WHAT IS FOOD SAFETY?

Food safety refers to the way we grow, harvest, transport, handle, process, prepare and store food and beverages in a way that reduces the risk of becoming sick from foodborne diseases. The fundamentals of food safety aim to prevent food, beverages, and water from being contaminated, which can lead to food poisoning, other sicknesses, and even death.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

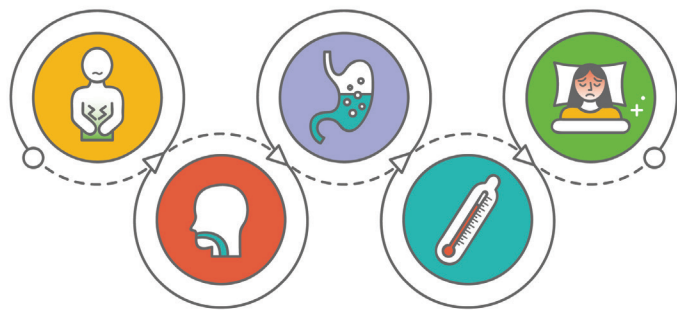
Food safety is a global concern. It is important we take food safety seriously to protect ourselves and our loved ones from falling ill. Unsafe food and drinks can contain harmful **bacteria, parasites, viruses, and chemicals** that can cause more than **250 diseases**. These range from diarrhea to various cancers. Whether you are handling food, drinks, and water for your job or cooking at home, it is essential proper food safety practices are applied to ensure you, your family, or your customers stay safe.

WHAT IS A FOODBORNE DISEASE?

Daily, people fall sick from the food and drinks they consume. This illness is referred to as **foodborne disease** and is often caused by **dangerous microorganisms** or germs. A common source of foodborne disease is eating fruits, vegetables, meat, and seafood contaminated with these microorganisms. In Cambodia, rice wine poisoning is a growing concern. As stated in the Phnom Penh Post's article by the General-Directorate of Consumer Protection, Competition and Fraud Repression (CCF), it commonly occurs when the toxic chemical methanol is mixed with unregulated rice wine to make it stronger.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The most common symptoms of foodborne illness are diarrhea and/or vomiting. On average, this lasts between one and two days. Other symptoms include abdominal cramps, fever, nausea, joint ache, and fatigue. The incubation period, or time between exposure and the start of symptoms, ranges from a few hours to one week. Poisoning from adulterated rice wine can cause headaches, vomiting, difficulty breathing, unconsciousness, and even death.



Between June 2020 and July 2021, 70 Cambodians died from rice and herbal wine poisoning. For example, in May 2021, 13 people died and more than 80 were hospitalized after drinking rice wine laced with methanol at a funeral in Pursat.

Globally, eating contaminated food impacts populations. Every year:*

- 600 million people fall sick
- 420,000 people die
- 33 million healthy life years are lost
- US\$110 billion is lost in productivity and medical expenses

*WHO figures

In Cambodia, the following cases were reported between 2014 and 2019:*

- 135 foodborne disease outbreaks
- 5,825 individual cases
- 81 deaths
- 389 cases of rice wine poisoning, causing 50 deaths (2015 to 2017)

*Mekong Institute figures

HEALTHY GROWING & HYGIENE

There are simple steps you can take when growing, storing, handling, and preparing food to keep it safe from contamination.

PRODUCING HEALTHY FOOD

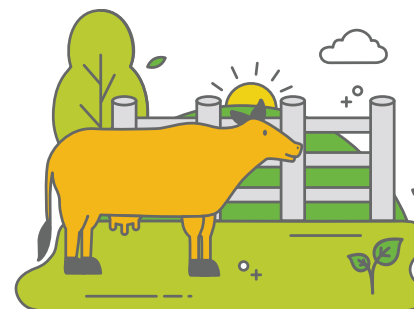
1 PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Wash hands after going to the toilet, changing a nappy, or contacting animals. according to Ministry of Health hygiene measure.
- Change and clean dirty clothes and wash/bathe regularly.
- Cover cuts and wounds.



2 SAFE FIELDS

- Keep animals out of growing fields.
- Keep livestock in a fenced area downhill of growing fields.
- Collect rubbish from in and around growing fields.



3 FECAL WASTE

- Only use properly treated fecal waste (manure).
- Treated fecal waste should be applied to fields before planting.
- Leave time between applying fecal waste and harvesting in accordance with agricultural techniques.



4 IRRIGATION WATER

- Identify the source of all water used in growing fields.
- Protect water from fecal contamination.
- Use control measures when using contaminated or unknown water.

5 EQUIPMENT

- Before using harvest and storage equipment, wash with clean water and dry.
- Before, during, and after harvesting, keep containers off the ground.
- Limit animal and non-worker access to harvest and storage areas.

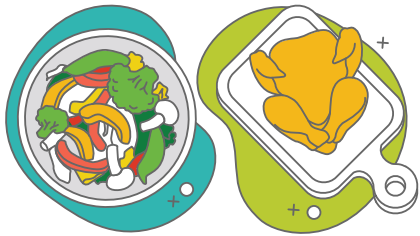
When handling and preparing food, there are easy measures you should take. These are especially important during COVID-19 to curb the spread of the pandemic while protecting the health of you and your family.

1 KEEP IT CLEAN

- Wash hands before handling food and during preparation.
- Properly clean and sanitize surfaces, cooking equipment and utensils.
- Keep kitchen and cooking areas free of pests and insects.
- Store materials and ingredients in airtight containers.

2 RAW & COOKED FOODS

- Separate raw and cooked foods. For example, store raw chicken, meat and seafood separately.
- Use different utensils, such as knives and chopping boards, to handle raw and cooked foods.
- Store raw and prepared foods in different containers to prevent cross-contamination.



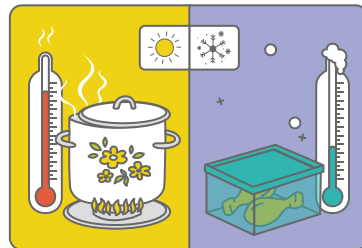
3 COOK CORRECTLY

- Cook food thoroughly, especially seafood, meat, poultry and eggs.
- Soups and stews should be boiled to 70°C.
- Meat and poultry should be cooked until the juices are clear, not pink.

- Cooked food should be thoroughly reheated.

4 TEMPERATURES

- Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Cooked and perishable foods should be promptly refrigerated, ideally below 5°C.
- Keep cooked food above 60°C before serving.
- Do not defrost frozen food at room temperature. Thaw in a fridge or airtight package in cold water.



5 SAFE WATER & PRODUCE

- Use clean or treated water.
- Wash fruit and vegetables with clean/treated water.
- Check expiry dates and packaging information.
- Keep materials and food at least 6cm off the ground.



SMART SHOPPING

Packaged goods should come with correct labelling that provides consumers with all of the information needed. This enables you to make a well-informed purchase. Information to watch out for on packaging includes:

- where it was manufactured
- ingredients
- nutritional content
- expiry date



NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FOOD SAFETY

Currently, **two national food safety standard schemes** exist in Cambodia in relation to food safety. Produce bearing the stamp of either comes with a guarantee about the way the food has been grown, harvested, and stored.

CAMGAP: GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE



If you spot fruit or vegetables bearing the stamp pictured, this means it has been certified as safe by the relevant authority. Farmers must go through rigorous training and inspections before becoming certified CamGAP producers. This means consumers can feel confident about the product's safety. A new QR scheme allows consumers to scan and trace the fruit and vegetable producer and location of the farm. This increases trust and transparency.



CAM ORGANIC

CAM ORGANIC is another national food safety standard scheme that guarantees the quality and safety of organically-grown produce. The guidelines were only implemented in April 2020, meaning adoption is still in the early stages. Produce bought with the label pictured come with assurances that they have been grown to high-quality standards that meet international organic guidelines.

FOOD FRAUD

WHAT IS FOOD FRAUD?

Food fraud is when food or beverages are sold in a way that intentionally **misleads** consumers about the quality or content for **financial gain**.

POPULAR FORMS OF FOOD FRAUD INCLUDE:

Dilution: mixing a high-value liquid with a liquid of lower value.

Substitution: replacing a high-value ingredient with another ingredient.

Concealment: hiding the low quality of ingredients.

Mislabeling: putting a false claim on packaging for economic gain.

Counterfeiting: copying a brand name, packaging or recipe for economic gain.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



Did you know laws exist to ensure the food you put on your plate is healthy and safe? There are also various organizations that enforce these laws, ensure producers and vendors comply with them, inspect food, and deal with food safety complaints from the public.

HERE ARE THE MAIN LAWS THAT PROTECT THE FOOD YOU EAT:

- Sub-degree on Organization & Functioning of Ministry of Health**
 This positions the Ministry of Health as the main authority ensuring your food is safe. It oversees the preparation and examination of food safety procedures.
- Law on the Management of Quality & Safety of Products & Services**
 This protects consumer health through various food safety systems. This includes consumer rights, quality labelling and commercial fraud. It also governs quality and safety inspections, and legal action. Its ultimate goal is to provide consumers with a right to safe products and reliable information.
- The Law on Standards of Cambodia**
 This ensures fair trade, and aims to improve the quality of products and services while enhancing consumer protection. The National Standards Council and Institute of Standards of Cambodia operate under this law.

- **The Law on Consumer Protection**

This ensures the protection of consumers and promotes fair competition in business. It protects the rights and interests of consumers and ensures consumers and traders engage with confidence. It also lays out information standards businesses must meet in relation to consumers, such as labelling.

- **Food Safety Law**

This draft law was prepared in 2015 and after several revisions is expected to be approved in 2022. It aims to establish a food safety system to protect consumer health by preventing, controlling, and eliminating food-related pollution and hazards. It covers processed and unprocessed foods, as well as the entire farm to fork food production chain.

HERE ARE THE MAIN BODIES THAT ENSURE YOUR FOOD IS SAFE:

- **Consumer Protection, Competition & Fraud Repression Directorate General (CCF)**

Operating under the Ministry of Commerce, CCF is the main government agency tasked with overseeing consumer protection in Cambodia. CCF carries out food inspections to ensure standards are complied with. It also confiscates misbranded, adulterated, unsafe, and poor-quality foods. CCF also deals with complaints about food fraud.

🌐 www.ccfkg.gov.kh 📞 023 231 856 / 092 830 856 ✉ contact.info@ccfdg.gov.kh

- **General Directorate of Agriculture (GDA)**

The General Directorate of Agriculture is responsible for the implementation of the management mechanisms of Cambodia Good Agriculture Practices (CamGAP) and issuing certificates of CamGAP compliance.

🌐 www.gda.maff.gov.kh

📞 023 888 427

✉ info.gdamaff@gmail.com

- **Institute of Standards of Cambodia (ISC)**

Operating under the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology, and Innovation, ISC is the national body responsible for setting the standards and guidelines for products in Cambodia. It also oversees certifications and ensures product safety is adhered to.

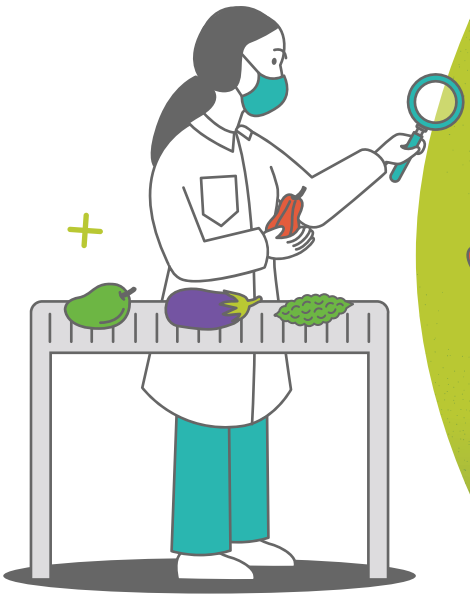
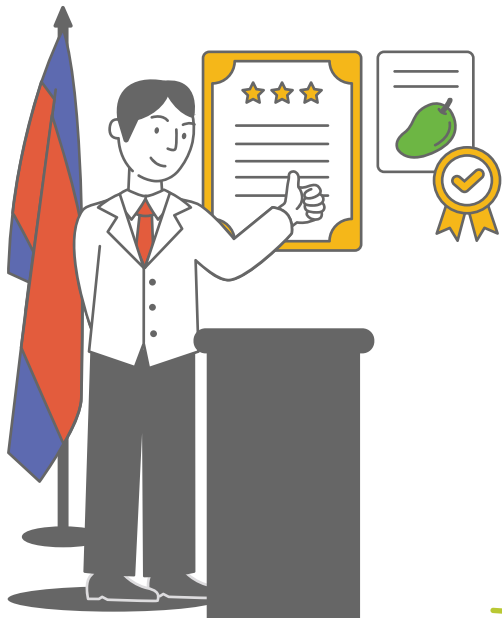
🌐 www.isc.gov.kh 📞 023 428 745 ✉ discinfo@camnet.com.kh

- **Food Safety Bureau**

Operating under the Ministry of Health's Department of Drug and Food, this agency regulates restaurants and other food vendors. It is also a member of the International Food Safety Authorities Network, a voluntary global network of national authorities with a role in food safety.

🌐 www.ddfcambodia.com 📞 023 880 248 / 023 883 025 ✉ edb.ddf@online.com.kh





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