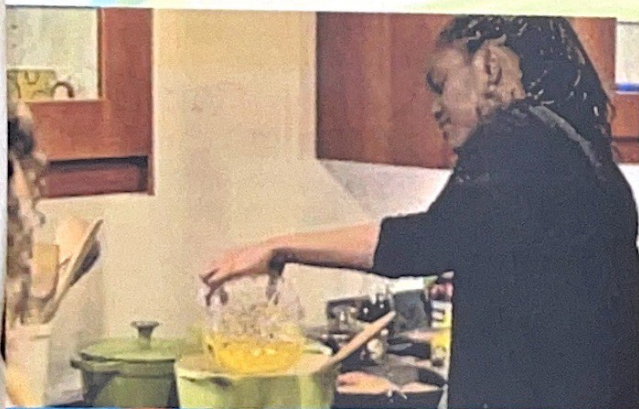


## What does Codex do to ensure good public health?

First, Codex sets standards that protect consumer health. An example is food labeling which provides vital information needed to guide the consumer to buy safe and healthy food.

Again, Codex sets maximum levels of pesticides, veterinary drugs in food, food additives and contaminants. The setting of maximum levels is all directed at protecting consumer health. It also ensures that food traded internationally are safe.



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## Codex, food safety and public health





## Codex, food safety and public health

Unsafe food poses global health threats and endangers everyone. Infants, young children, pregnant women, the elderly and those with various forms of disease are particularly vulnerable. Indeed, every year, millions of children contract diarrhoeal diseases with not less than 96,000 dying.

Unsafe food creates a vicious cycle of diarrhoea and malnutrition, threatening the nutritional status of the most vulnerable. Where food supplies are insecure, people tend to shift to less healthy diets and consume more "unsafe foods" – in which chemical, microbiological and other hazards pose health risks.

By food safety, we mean food that is free from contamination and ensure good health for those who consume it. What this means is that when food is not safe it adversely affects the health of consumers.

The importance of food safety lies in the fact that it helps to achieve better human nutrition and health. Improving food safety is thus key in achieving social and economic development.



Governments ought to make food safety a public health priority, as it plays a pivotal role in developing policies and regulatory frameworks, establishing and implementing effective food safety systems that ensure that food producers and suppliers along the whole food chain operate responsibly and supply safe food to consumers.

Food can become contaminated at any point of production and distribution. A large proportion of food borne disease incidents are caused by foods improperly prepared or mishandled foods at home, or in food service establishments or markets.

Not all food handlers and consumers understand the roles they must play, such as adopting basic hygienic practices when buying, selling and preparing food to protect their health and that of the wider community.

