



# FOOD SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

## STREET VENDING:

Street vendors contribute to the Mauritian economy as it provides a source of income for thousands of people in Mauritius, especially those who are unemployed or underemployed. It thus helps to reduce poverty, provide livelihoods, and increase entrepreneurship.

While street food is appreciated for its unique flavours and convenience, it is often perceived as a significant public health risk due to inadequate food handling practices that can be detrimental to health. Therefore, it is essential to implement interventions at all levels to ensure the best possible compliance with food safety standards in Mauritius.

## WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOD SAFETY?

### FOR CONSUMERS

- Access to safer and more nutritious food.
- Improved health and nutritional status for street food vendors and their families.

### FOR SUPPLIERS

- Better preparation practices and business practices.
- Higher quality products.
- Increased consumer confidence, leading to increased sales.
- Improved market access and higher potential income.
- Safer working environment.





## CODEX STANDARDS IN THE FOOD TRADE

CODEX is a set of internationally recognized standards and guidelines aimed at protecting consumer health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade. Street vendors who adhere to good practices advocated by CODEX, provide their customers with safe and quality food products.

## HOW TO IMPROVE FOOD SAFETY FOR SALE ON PUBLIC ROADS?

- Use only potable water for drinking, cooking, and making ice. Do not reuse water that has been used for washing utensils, food, or hands.
- Separate raw food from cooked food. Avoid direct or indirect contact between raw food and cooked or prepared food that will be consumed without further heating.

### During the transport, handling, and storage of prepared food:

- Maintain the vehicle used for transporting prepared food in a good state of cleanliness. Do not transport animals.

### Limit the duration of food transport between the preparation site and the sales site to facilitate:

- Keeping hot food at a temperature above 60°C.
- Keeping cold food at a temperature below 5°C (on ice or in a refrigerator).
- Reduce the exposure time of food, protect it from dust, keep it out of reach of consumers.
- Cook food thoroughly at a minimum temperature of 70°C. When reheating, keep the food at 70°C for two minutes. Do not keep leftovers until the next day if no refrigerated storage is available.
- Keep sales units, equipment, and utensils clean and protected. Disinfect surfaces.
- Wash hands with soap and clean water. Wear clean clothing.

## MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS TO MEET CODEX STANDARDS:

The Mauritian government has taken several measures to ensure that street vendors comply with CODEX rules.

- 1. Adoption of food legislation:** Since 1998, food legislation and food regulations have been in effect. These regulations are based on CODEX standards, to which street vendors must comply, particularly regarding the handling, storage, and preparation of food.
- 2. Training Programmes:** Food handlers have to complete mandatory training programmes to ensure good safety and good hygiene practices. Upon completion of the training, a food handling certificate is issued to them.
- 3. Registration:** Street vendors must register with the relevant authorities in Mauritius. Post-registration checks are conducted after the start of street vending activities to ensure compliance with food regulations based on CODEX standards.
- 4. Environment:** The government has undertaken the relocation of street vendors who were previously operating in unhygienic environments to more suitable sites. For example, street vendors from Ruisseau du Pouce have been relocated to the Victoria Urban Terminal.

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