

# Food safety must be everyone's business

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## 7th June is World Food Safety Day

One of the basic foods for us is none other than food. Healthy food means a healthy mind and body. It is most important that we eat healthy food for our body. We must know that unsafe food containing harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemical substances causes more than 200 diseases. Global estimation signifies that the impact of unsafe food costs low- and middle-income economies around US\$ 95 billion in lost yield each year and good hygiene practices in the food and agricultural sectors help to decrease the appearance and increase of food borne diseases.

Getting access to good food and good nutrition makes an individual healthy and unsafe food can cause diseases ranging from diarrhoea to cancers. Unsafe food creates a vicious cycle of disease and malnutrition, particularly affecting infants, young children, elderly and the sick. Food safety has a critical role in assuring that food stays safe at every stage of the food chain - from production to harvest, processing, storage, distribution, all the way to preparation and consumption.

World Food Safety Day (WFSD) on 7th June aims to draw attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect and manage food borne risks, contributing to food security, human health, economic prosperity, agriculture, market access, tourism and sustainable development. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) jointly facilitate the observance of WFSD, in collaboration with Member States and other relevant organizations. This international day is an opportunity to strengthen efforts to ensure that the food we eat is safe, mainstream food safety in the public agenda and reduce the burden of food borne diseases globally.

On 3 August 2020, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution WHA73.5 to recognize WFSD as an important milestone and a platform for raising awareness at all levels about the importance of food safety, and for promoting and facilitating actions to prevent food borne diseases at local, national, regional and global levels; to strengthen global efforts for food safety to reduce the burden of food borne disease. On 20 December 2018 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 73/250 proclaiming a WFSD. As of 2019, every 7 June is a time to celebrate the myriad benefits of safe food. It is important as it can make people aware of food safety issues, demonstrating how to prevent illness through

food safety, discussing collaborative approaches to improved food safety across sectors, promoting solutions and ways of being more food safe, etc.

FAO is a recognized leader in the development of global food safety initiatives. The Food Safety and Quality Programme supports an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to food safety management and holistic and feasible “food chain” solutions to specific food safety problems as laid out in FAO’s Strategy for Improving Food Safety Globally.

We must not forget that there is no food security without food safety and safe food is essential to human health and well-being. Investing in food safety today will reap future rewards and food safety must be based on science. The way in which food is produced, stored, handled and consumed affects the safety of our food. Food safety is a shared responsibility between governments, producers and consumers. Everybody has a role to play from farm to table to ensure the food we consume is safe and will not cause damage to our health.

Apart from global initiatives there are initiatives being taken in India too on the occasion by government and other agencies. The Food and Agriculture Centre of Excellence at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) shall concentrate on poultry for this year’s WFSD. Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHD CCI), which is based in New Delhi, will host a 6-hour ‘virtual celebration’ of WFSD on 7 June with the theme safe food today for a healthy tomorrow

Whenever we buy food products then we see a logo named FSSAI. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been established under Food Safety and Standards , 2006 which consolidates various acts & orders that have hitherto handled food related issues in various Ministries and Departments. FSSAI has been created for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

There is no doubt that food safety must be everyone’s business. There are government departments which try to ensure that food that we get is safe. But we are more aware that adulteration has been everywhere. Unethical business practices or agricultural practices are enhancing unsafe food. All of us must ensure that food that we eat is safe from the field to our kitchen. The foods which are packed and served by others must be safe too. Vigilance of each and every citizen can only ensure safe food all the time. Together we can make all food items safe and let us do it for our own interest.

Ranjan K Baruah