



**MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIALIZATION, TRADE AND ENTERPRISE  
DEVELOPMENT**

**WORLD FOOD SAFETY DAY**

**Date: 7<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2020**

**Theme: “Food safety, everyone’s business”**

**MESSAGE FROM BETTY C. MAINA, CBS - CABINET SECRETARY**

Today we commemorate the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Food Safety Day with the aim of drawing attention and inspiring actions for prevention of foodborne health risks. This will assure food security, nutrition & health and foster market access for economic prosperity towards sustainable development.

Food is the anchor that sustains human life; ensuring its safety has increasingly become crucial. This year’s theme, **“Food Safety, Everyone’s Business”** encourages all of us to play our role and emphasizes on the importance of stakeholders working collaboratively to make sure nutritious and affordable food is accessible to all.

The government has set up food safety regulations that are executed collaboratively by various government agencies.

To this end, the Government of Kenya, through the Kenya Bureau of Standard (KEBS) has developed standards, guidelines, and codes of practice - and additionally adopted others through its membership at Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC). These standards give guidance or specifications to aspects of product formulations and nutritional requirements, establish safe limits for food contaminants and guide on the prerequisite programs necessary to achieve Good Agricultural and Manufacturing practices (GAPs/GMPs). Moreover, KEBS as the national regulator of food standards and specifications, provides conformity assessment of food through testing, product/system certification, marks of quality, inspection, and market surveillance. These services promote a safe food ecosystem in the country while enhancing competitiveness of products in the market.

The backbone of any nation is provision of affordable quality food that is safe for a healthy life for better living standards. This is well demonstrated through prioritizing

food security as one of its pillars in the Big Four Agenda to provide food security for all. The government has prioritized improvement of quality infrastructure ecosystem through human and capital investments as well as collaborative means to enhance safety of foods in our country. In order to improve the safety standards for foods, the Government has emphasized on holistic approach where the entire food chain from the farms to the fork is regulated through multi agency one government approach rather than independent agencies.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) consumption of contaminated food leads to more than half a billion cases of illness a year. Here in Kenya unsafe foods has led to many ailments, diseases and even fatalities as was witnessed in 2004 in Makueni District where 26 people died of consuming aflatoxin contaminated maize. Similarly, fatalities have occurred through consumption of uninspected meat from dead carcasses due to diseases such as anthrax. The recent rising cases of cancers and other lifestyle diseases such as diabetes are associated with unhealthy foods, hence the need to pay more attention to food safety. It is therefore evident that having safe food not only alleviate high cost of medical services but also ensures a productive population.

In conclusion, food safety requires multilateral and concerted effort from the different players - government and private agencies, business operators, farmers as well as consumers. It is important for consumers to observe food hygiene when handling food. It is also the duty of the consumer to follow labelling instructions provided on food packages particularly the prepackaged foods. These instructions guide the user on, for instance, proper storage conditions, and means of preparation which goes a long way to ensure food safety.

Lastly, I wish to recognize and commend the efforts of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) for their drive to make food safe for all through their joint program implemented under the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).

Thank you.