

Control of Street Vended Foods

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Street - vended foods are very common to most countries and this has now become a rapidly growing industry. In terms of convenience and cost, most consumers prefer street-vended foods. However, street-foods are also recognized as potential hazard to health.



FAO/WHO Expert Committee in 1983, considering the possibility of chemical and microbiological contamination under street conditions concluded that efforts must be made (a) to educate the personnel involved;



(b) to improve the environmental conditions in which the trade is practiced and (c) to provide the essential services to assist street-food vendors in assuring the safety of the food. In 1986, it was recommended that - in addition to these efforts - simple techniques for regulation of street foods be implemented.

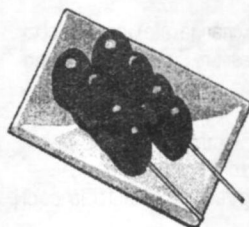
"Street-foods" have been defined as "ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors es-

pecially in streets and other public places".

Many of the hygienic requirements of the street foods are the same as those for indoor foods. Street-food vendors should be categorized according to the type of food they sell and their mobility, for determining the type of requirements to be applied. Street-foods can be broadly grouped as: meals, snacks and beverages. Many street vendors are stationary and may have stalls, tables and chairs. Ambulant vendors may use pushcarts, bicycles or other vehicles for carrying their wares. Some carry them by hand, heads or on shoulder poles. Some use animals to transport food.

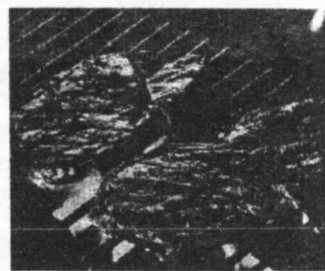


Street foods include a large variety of items with different degrees of potential for causing diseases. eg: parched grains, dry bakery products, sufficiently sugared, salted or acidulated foods and many fermented items have a much lower disease producing potential than certain foods which readily support bacterial growth. Foods thoroughly cooked or fried and consumed on the



spot are safer than pre-cooked foods. Such as rice, especially when they are

held at ambient temperature (15 to 40° C) for more than 4 to 5 hours. Highly coloured foods and beverages more likely to have un-permitted ad-



ditives. Consideration of varying potentials of different food items to cause disease can be used in classifying local street foods for application of appropriate control measures.

RAW MATERIALS & INGREDIENTS

a) Raw materials and ingredients should be obtained from known and reliable sources.



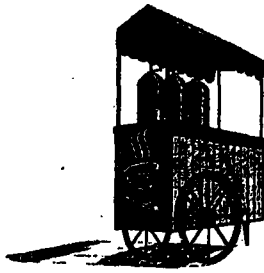
b) It should be assured that materials remain wholesome during transport, storage and handling through processing, cooking and sale.

PLACE OF PREPARATION & SALE

a) Food should be prepared in a clean and well-lighted place protected from strong sun, dust, rain and wind. It should be away from

sources of contamination – solid and liquid wastes, animals including pets and pests.

- b) Equipment should be such that they can be cleaned easily made or covered with impervious materials. Preparation should not be carried out on or near the ground.
- c) Utensils, pots, pans and other containers should be clean and good condition which does not release toxic or hazardous materials (copper, lead, cadmium etc.) into food and beverages especially when they are acidic. They should not be used for any other purposes.
- d) All surfaces of cutting boards should be in good condition and



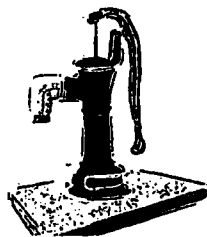
free from pits and cracks for easy cleaning. If raw meat or poultry is handled separate cutting boards should be used.

- e) Premises used for preparation and processing should not be used for habitation or storage of materials unconnected to food.
- f) Sale points, stationary or ambulant, should be located in a place where risk of contamination from rubbish, sewerage and other noxious or toxic substances is absent or minimal.
- g) Vending units should be designed and constructed so that they are easily cleaned and maintained.
- h) The time required to transport food between the preparation and vending units should be such

that bacterial proliferation does not reach hazardous levels.

WATER

- One of the most critical problems in street-food vending is the supply of water of acceptable quality and in sufficient quantities for drinking, washing, for cleaning and other operations.
- As far as possible, the production and sales units should have their own supply of potable water.



- Water used for drinking and preparation of beverages should be potable. Special care should be taken to assure that such water is maintained in a sanitary state.
- Water used for washing utensils, food and hands should be safe and should not be re-used.

WASTE DISPOSAL

All waste should be handled and disposed of in such a manner as to avoid contamination of food, water and the environment. Access to food waste by pests (insects and rodents) as well as by



animals (dogs and cats) should be avoided. The following type of waste, if possible, should be disposed of separately:

- a) Liquid waste (except oil and fat) should be emptied into the nearest sewer or drain. Some form of trap should be used to ensure that only liquid waste is discharged into the sewer or drain.
- b) Remains of food may be separated and kept for feeding animals. Utensils on which food has been served to customers should not be licked by animals.
- c) Other solid waste should be kept in covered containers to be removed at least once daily.

FOOD HANDLERS

1. All street-food handlers should be licensed.
2. Food handlers should be educated, encouraged or supervised to stop their business promptly, it at any time they suffer from diarrhoea or vomiting or have boils, sores or ulcers on exposed parts of the skin. Resumption of business after recovery may be subject to authorization by the appropriate food control authority.
3. Food handlers should wear clean and proper clothing according to



prevailing local standards. Where possible, should be encouraged to wear clean over-all aprons – light in colour.

4. Food handlers should wash their hands with soap and water after handling raw foods, before handling cooked foods, after using the toilet, after handling unsanitary objects such as garbage containers and after contact with toxic substances such as pesticides and disinfectants.

5. In the preparation and sale of food, food handlers should refrain from unhygienic and unsightly practices such as – chewing or smoking tobacco, chewing betel nut or chewing gum; touching mouth, tongue, nose, eyes etc and spitting, sneezing and coughing on or near food.

PREPARATION AND PROCESSING

- Some vendors carry out the final preparation with cooking (frying, grilling, baking etc.) in open stalls in front of their customers. This exposure tends to inspire confidence, and in many cases, improves the taste and enjoyment of food. However, this does not obviate the necessity of observing the basic rules of food safety.
- An important principle in preparing and processing food is to avoid direct and indirect contact between raw and cooked or pre-

pared food, which will be consumed without adequate re-heating. Indirect contact may be caused by unwashed cutting board, knife or hands.

- Grains (rice, pulses, beans etc.) and vegetables and fruits should be soaked and washed sufficiently with safe running water to remove contamination adhering to their surfaces.
- Meat, poultry, fish and similar foods should also be washed, but should not come into contact with other food, which is to be consumed raw.
- If frozen foods are used they should be thawed before processing.
- If food is processed by heat treatment (frying, grilling, baking etc.) it should be thoroughly cooked – that is, the temperature of all parts of the food reaches at least 70° C.
- Utensils used for cooking should not be used for other purposes.

TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE OF PREPARED FOOD

- Ready- to- eat food and beverages should be transported to the sales point in clean, well-protected and covered containers.
- If foods, which easily engender bacterial growth at ambient temperatures, are to be transported over long distances, the container should be maintained at a temperature below 10° C. Chemical preservatives should not be used.
- Vehicle used for transport should be clean and should not carry animals, toxic substances or contaminating materials.
- If cold storage is used, bulk food should not be hot when put into the refrigerator.

