Food Safety in Nepal

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Knowing the truth,
- Over 200 diseases are caused by unsafe food containing harmful bacteria, parasites, viruses, chemical substances.
- 2 million deaths occur every year from contaminated food or drinking water.
- At least 56 million people globally suffer from one or more foodborne trematodiases.
- Access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food is key to sustaining life and promoting good health.

FOOD SAFETY
- defined as assurance that food will not cause harm to consumer when it is prepared and eaten according to its intended use (FAO/WHO, 1997).
- Governance: Act of governing Food hygiene is important aspect of food safety.
- Five major principles of food hygiene as per WHO:
  - Prevent contaminating food with pathogens spreading from people, pets, and pests.
  - Separate raw and cooked foods to prevent contaminating the cooked foods.
  - Cook foods for the appropriate length of time and at the appropriate temperature to kill pathogens.
  - Store food at the proper temperature.
  - Do use safe water and cooked materials.

MAJOR ISSUES IN FOOD SAFETY IN NEPAL
- Microbiological hazards
- Chemical hazards
- Surveillance of foodborne disease
- New technologies
- Capacity building

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1. Microbiological hazards
   - significant increase have been reported over the past few decades.
   - Salmonella spp., Campylobacter spp., enterohaemorrhagic Escherichia coli
   - bovine spongiform encephalopathy

2. Chemical hazards
   - Chemicals are significant source of foodborne illness associated with immune, endocrine and developing nervous systems in the human system.
   - natural toxicants such as mycotoxins
   - environmental contaminants such as mercury, lead, radionuclides and dioxins
   - naturally occurring chemicals in plants, such as glycoalkaloids
   - pesticide and veterinary drug residues

3. Surveillance of foodborne disease
   - Most of foodborne disease cases are not reported—implementation of effective solutions often fail.
   - Effective control of food-borne disease must be based on evaluated information.

4. New technologies
   - potential public health effects of new technologies have raised concern.
   - New technologies such as genetic engineering, irradiation of food, ohmic heating and modified atmosphere packaging.

5. Capacity building
   - developing countries are poorly equipped to respond to existing and emerging food safety problems.
   - lack technical and financial resources, an effective institutional framework, trained manpower
   - sufficient information about the hazards and risks involved.

In Nepal
   - system based on a multiple agencies executing different legislations related to food safety.
   - the government agency for execution of food legislation (Food Act 1967) is Department of Food Technology and Quality Control.
   - existing food legislation is not adequate to address the present day realities of food safety issues, because.
   - not directed by the risk assessment principles.
   - human resource in food control inadequate.
   - food contaminants analysis facility is poor.
   - food adulteration rate in Nepal is 15.6% for the fiscal year 2011, increasing with years and reached 25.80 percent packed food items imported.

GAPS • NEPAL
   - Awareness to consumers and producers.
   - Food safety policy.
   - Surveillance systems of food-borne diseases.
   - Risk assessments.
   - Risk communication and advocacy.
   - Capacity building.
   - International and national cooperation.
Nepal has a great and rich variation in languages, religions, ethnic groups, culture and traditions. But has a strong unity among these variations.

- 123 languages and
- 128 ethnic groups

Hence, we can find unity in diversity in Nepal.