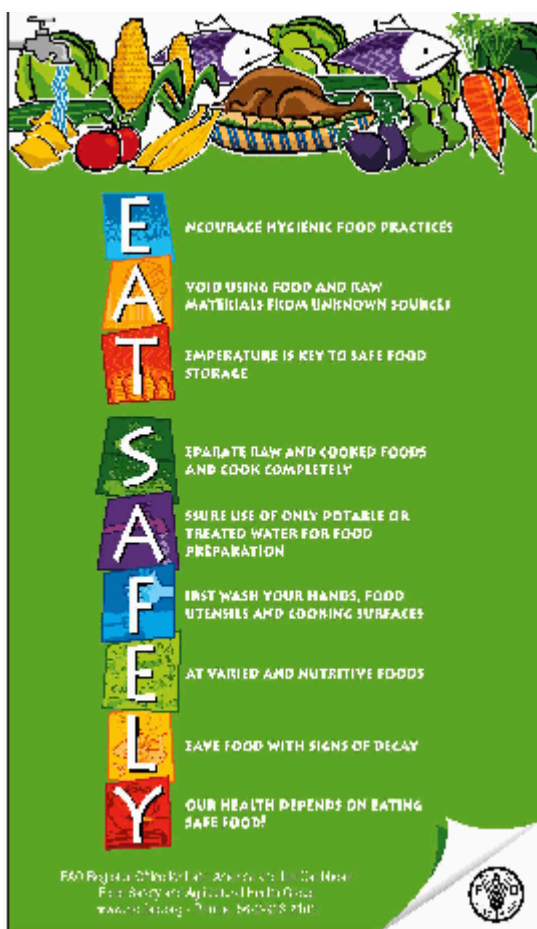


Food safety and quality:

### “Eat Safely”, a campaign to prevent food-borne diseases

*Through simple messages it will impact directly on consumers so that they can become the best guardians of their own health.*

**Santiago, Chile, April 3, 2009** - Washing your hands before you eat or using only potable water to prepare foods are some of the simple and basic precautions that contribute to a healthy diet. These and other recommendations form part of the “Eat Safely” campaign, launched by the Food Safety and Agricultural Health Group of FAO’s Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, campaign that seeks to guarantee food safety and prevent food borne diseases.



An estimated 1.8 million people die each year because of diarrheic diseases caused by the consumption of contaminated food and water. According to FAO and WHO’s Regional Conference on Food Safety for Latin America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, 2005), in 2004, 57 000 people died because of said diseases in the Region.

Through key messages delivered in a variety of visual formats, the campaign targets consumers directly, so they can become the principal guardians of their own health, learning practical techniques to ensure food safety.

“The access to healthy, nutritious and safe food is an essential human right, linked to the right to life and to food. All consumers have the right to expect and demand healthy and good quality foods, and on that we are focusing our campaign”, stated FAO’s Senior Officer for Food Safety and Quality, Maya Piñeiro.

The campaign materials are available in English, Spanish and French, and will be distributed in all countries of the Region to governments, industry, consumer organizations and the general public, amongst others.

The campaign delivers information on good practices in aspects such as food handling, storage and preparation, since a mistake made by the consumer can undo all the cares taken in the previous steps of the food chain.

Delivering exact and appropriate information on diet and hygiene, the campaign teaches how to use foods appropriately, and how to avoid contamination and pathogen growth using the proper handling, storage and cooking habits.

Posters, t-shirts and other graphic materials also incorporate the concept of nutrition, highlighting the importance of a balanced, varied and healthy diet. As well as informing consumers on the proper cares to take at home, they will also learn to be wary when they buy foods, playing a key role in ensuring safety all throughout the food chain, to achieve healthy and good quality foods.

**More information:**

“Eat Safely” web page: <http://www.rlc.fao.org/es/prioridades/sanidad/comesano.htm>

Food and Nutrition - FAO Regional Office: <http://www.rlc.fao.org/es/prioridades/sanidad/>

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