

*Health and Safety Guide*

# HEALTHY BUSINESS



For Women in the Agri and Food Processing Industry

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### African Women’s Development Fund (AWDF)

78 Ambassadorial Enclave  
East Legon, Accra, Ghana  
Phone: +233 242 700 881  
Email: awdf@awdf.org  
www.awdf.org

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Text and content development: Linda Dari and Karen Hurt  
Design and illustrations: Sally Whines

## Dear Reader,

This guide is for African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) grantees and other women's rights organisations working in agri and food processing. Its goal is to provide important information on food health and safety practices that you can put into practice. When you do this, your business will get a good name. More people will want to be your customers. Your business will grow and you will earn income for your livelihoods.

We all use, process and sell food in our own different ways. But there are certain rules about food safety that apply to us all. We must make sure we manage our businesses in a safe way so that we don't have injuries. And so our customers get healthy food.

### This guide:

- explains how food gets contaminated
- tells you what signs to look out for
- shows how to prevent food you work with from making people sick
- offers tips and check lists to help you manage health and safety at work
- offers some activity ideas and ways to share this important information.

### Health and safety is all our responsibility

Governments and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) are doing their best to improve the safety of food supply. But diseases are still spread and this is still a big health problem.

We need to work together. Governments must make sure we have good food health and safety policies to guide us and regulations we must follow. Together with NGOs, governments need to make sure that people are trained in health and safety. They need to do health and safety check ups. As business women, we must make our workplaces safe for ourselves, our workers and our customers.

### Share what you learn

AWDF wants the information in this book to reach as many small to medium sized food producers and processors as possible. Share what you learn from it. Get together with others to do some of the activities.

If we all stick to health and safety in our workplaces, we will grow better businesses. This will help us to pay for a decent life for ourselves and our families.

*Nafi Chinery*

Capacity Building Programme Specialist

AWDF

## How to use this guide

When you read through this guide and do the exercises, think of yourself as a health and safety inspector. It will help you see more clearly how to make sure your food does not get contaminated.

### Step by step

After you have worked through a section of the guide, walk around your workplace. Use the guide to make notes about what you need to change and improve to make sure:

- it is a safe place to work with food
- it is a safe place for you and others to work in
- your food does not get contaminated.

### Teach others

Use this guide to explain contamination and health and safety to others. Do some of the exercises together. Discuss how to solve health and safety challenges.

If you have a mobile phone with a camera, you can take photographs so you can discuss solutions with other people.

### Sharing solutions

If you come together with other women in agri and food processing, maybe you can share the costs for some things, like wooden pallets for storage? Maybe you can buy things, like gloves and hair nets in bulk to get them at a lower price? Could you build a good drainage system together?



### Make posters

Make health and safety posters to put up in your workplace. The posters will remind you and others what the rules are and how to keep yourselves and your food safe.

### Have health and safety events

You can become known in your community for caring about health and safety. This will help improve the health of your community. It is also good for your business image.

For example, it is Global Handwashing Day on 15 October. Handwashing with soap is one of the most important ways to prevent food contamination and sicknesses. You can use pages 12 and 13 to show the correct way to wash hands.



# How food gets contaminated

We all want ourselves, our families and our community to be healthy. No one likes being sick. It makes us miserable and costs money. Our children miss out on school. Business women like us lose money when we or our workers are sick, or our food makes our customers sick.

We can prevent people getting sick from food borne illnesses. But first we need to understand micro organisms.

## Meaning of words

**Contaminated** means impure in a bad way. It means to make something harmful, especially by adding some substance that should not be in it.

**Food borne illnesses** are sicknesses that you get from eating food that has bad micro organisms.

## Micro organisms

Micro means very small. Organisms are living things. You can only see some micro organisms under a microscope. Others you can see with your eyes.

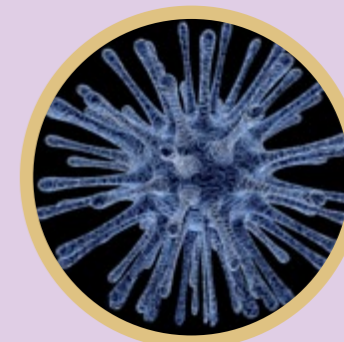
There are different types of micro organisms. Some micro organisms are good for us. Some make us sick. This book helps us understand what we can do to prevent bad micro organisms getting into our food.



## These micro organisms contaminate food or water:

### Viruses

Examples: norovirus, which causes gastroenteritis (diarrhoea, vomiting and stomach pain), and Hepatitis A and E which make your liver swell up.



### Bacteria

Example: salmonella. You can get it from eating raw and undercooked meat.



### Fungus

Example: water moulds grow on dead and living organisms.



### Parasites

Example: worms, which get into your body and live inside it.



# How does food become contaminated?

## 1. Contamination happens from things that can carry bad micro organisms.

These creatures can carry bad micro organisms:

- vermin, like rats and mice
- insects, like flies and cockroaches
- parasites, like worms
- animals, like fish, chickens, pigs, goats, cows and dogs
- human, insect and animal faeces.



## How flies spread diseases

Flies carry diseases that cause millions of people to die every year. The diseases include typhoid, tuberculosis (TB) and dysentery. You can die from these diseases if you are not treated quickly. This story shows how flies spread diseases.



## Did you know?

- Flies pick up germs from:
  - rubbish that lies around in the streets
  - rubbish dumps
  - sewage.
- Flies breed in rubbish and sewage.
- The female fly lays eggs. Within 12 to 30 hours, around 100 eggs hatch. A fly lives for about a month in summer and longer in winter.



**1.** Flies eat dirty things. When a fly eats, it drops digestive juices on top of food (or faeces). Then it sponges it up with its mouth.



**2.** Flies move around and can land on our food. The fly puts harmful micro organisms and germs onto the food with its mouth and legs.



**3.** We sell this food without knowing it is contaminated.



**4.** Our food may make our customers, ourselves and our families very sick.



# How does a person get sick?



Someone coughs in your face.



Someone sneezes close to you.



You breathe in the air of someone who has vomited.



You eat food that has gone bad.



You can get sick when you touch livestock and then eat food without washing your hands with soap first.



Flies can spread germs that make you sick.



Harmful bacteria live under your finger nails and on dirty skin.



Parasites, like worms, live in your blood, intestines (your stomach) and other places where they can grow and feed. They cause many different health problems.

## Meaning of words

**Faeces** is waste matter that is left over after the body has digested food. It comes out of the bowels. Other words we use for faeces are: excrement, waste, dung, manure, stools, droppings.

## 2. Contamination happens when you eat food that has chemicals on it.

Chemical contamination can happen when crops are sprayed with chemicals and have not been washed properly afterwards. It can also happen if your food comes into contact with toxic gases from aerosol cans, like pesticides or other poisons. Make sure you put these high up in cupboards away from your food workplaces.



### Sickness signs from eating contaminated food

If you eat contaminated food or drink contaminated water, you might have:

- vomiting
- diarrhoea (running stomach)
- blood in your diarrhoea
- fever
- bad tummy pains
- running hot and cold (chills)
- difficulty breathing
- tingly hands and feet.

## What to do as a business

Call the local health department if you think the person who became ill ate at a large gathering, from a home or other kind of food service place, or if it is a product that gets sold to other people. Make sure the health department follows up to prevent more people getting sick.

Keep a sample of the food you think caused the sickness. Take it to healthcare workers so they can check for contamination.

1. Wrap it up tightly in a plastic packet.
2. Write DANGER, DON'T EAT! on the packet.
3. Put it in a freezer.
4. Keep all the packaging, like cans or cartons.
5. Look at this list:



## Important

**Wash fruit and vegetables before you eat them.**

**Do one of these things to make your water safer:**

- Boil water for 1 minute.
- Add 2 drops of unscented household bleach to 1 litre of warm water. Cover and let it stand for 30 minutes before you use it.

## Write down:

- what the food is
- the date
- what else you noticed about the food
- the time it was eaten
- when the person first started getting sick.

Save any unopened products that are the same as the one the person ate.



## What to do when someone gets vomiting or diarrhoea

A baby, child or adult might get sick straightaway after eating contaminated food. Or it could happen hours or even days later. It is important to rehydrate.



## How to rehydrate

1. When you have diarrhoea (runny tummy) your body loses a lot of liquid. This is called dehydration. It can be dangerous, especially for babies and old people who can die if they do not get liquid back into their bodies quickly enough. Make this drink to help replace liquids.

2. Boil 1 litre of water.



3. Let it cool down.



4. Add 8 teaspoons of sugar and 1 level teaspoon of salt.



5. Mix it well.



6. Put it into a jug. Stir and drink 1 cup every time you vomit or go to the toilet.



- Go to a clinic if it does not stop after 24 hours for a child or 2 days for an adult.
- Check if there are other people who have eaten that same food or water.

## Important

If the person has blood in their vomit or diarrhoea, can't breathe properly or has tingly hands and feet, get them to a health worker straightaway.

# Stop food getting contaminated

There are simple and important things you can do to stop food getting contaminated.

## 1. Wash your hands

The simplest and most important way you can prevent food contamination is by washing your hands with soap. You must:

- wash your hands with soap
- dry them on a clean towel
- keep your nails short and clean.

### When to wash hands

#### WASH YOUR HANDS BEFORE YOU:

- eat
- handle food.

#### WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER YOU:

- use the toilet
- eat
- touch animals
- touch soil
- touch anything that might be contaminated
- cough, sneeze or blow your nose
- comb and handle your hair
- handle garbage
- handle chemicals, including cleaning chemicals
- handle food
- smoke.



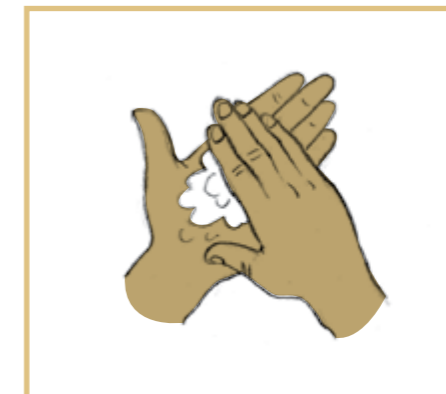
Harmful bacteria can live under your nails. Keep your nails cut short and brush under them when you wash your hands.



1. Wet and soap your hands.

## How to wash your hands

Always use soap and water.



2. Rub your palms together.



3. Rub the backs of your hands.



4. Rub in between your fingers.



5. Rub your nails into your palms.



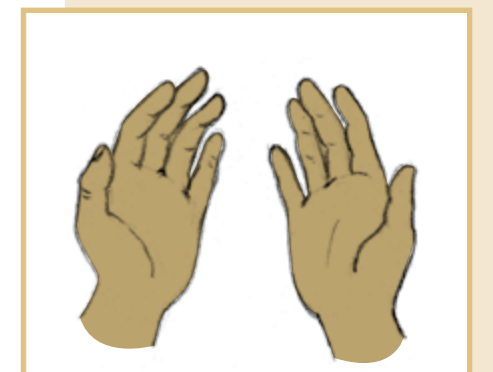
6. Wash around your thumbs.



7. Wash your palms with your fingers.



8. Wash your wrists.



9. Rinse and dry your hands.



## 2. Don't cross contaminate food

Cross contamination happens by mistake when harmful micro organisms are passed from one thing to another.

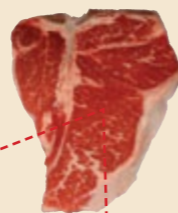
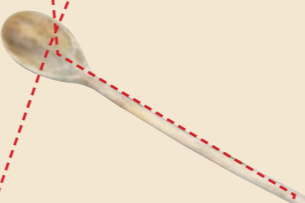
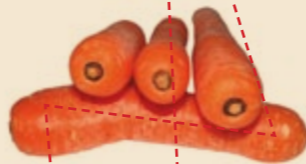
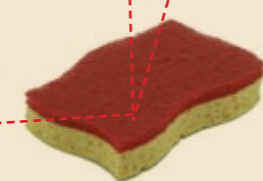
Food gets cross contaminated when:

- it touches a surface that has harmful micro organisms on it
- harmful germs from raw meat get onto other food, like vegetables
- you handle raw or contaminated food and then, without washing your hands, touch foods that are ready-to-eat
- raw or contaminated food touch foods that are ready-to-eat.

### How to prevent cross contamination

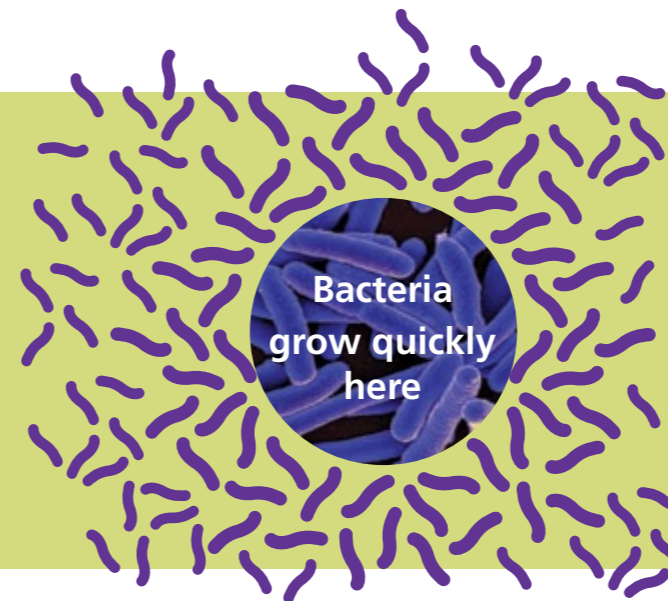
You must wash and sanitise everything you use or put food on in your work area. Do it before you work with food, and after you work with food.

1. Make sure everyone in your workplace knows how cross contaminations happens. They must take it seriously.
2. Make sure you always have sanitisers, like bleach, available.
3. Put a list on the wall where you or your workers tick to show they or you have cleaned things regularly and with clean cloths.
4. Regularly wash and clean your work area with sanitiser. This includes all surfaces and utensils, like table tops, cutting boards, knives and spoons.
5. Regularly wash your wiping cloths so they do not contaminate ready-to-eat foods and food products.
6. Keep cooked food and raw food in separate containers or places.
7. Never use the same knife for raw meat, poultry or seafood to chop produce or ready-to-eat foods.



## 3. Keep food at the correct temperature

Bacteria like warmth and wet. They grow fastest in temperatures that are between 5°C and 60°C.



**DANGER ZONE**

Germs need food to grow. Bacteria grow especially well on dairy products like milk, meat, poultry (chicken), fish and shellfish.



Germs need moisture to grow. They grow especially well in foods that are juicy, moist or wet.



*Did you know?*

100 °C is the boiling point temperature for water.

When you cook, the heat must go to above 60°C.

*Did you know?*

One tiny bacterium can multiply to over 2 million in 7 hours if the temperature is between 5°C and 60°C. The warmer the temperature, the faster they grow.

You must store raw and cooked food at a temperature under 5°C.

*Did you know?*

Water freezes at 0 °C.

## 4. What to wear

Show your customers that you keep your food healthy and fresh. Wear hair nets, masks, gloves and aprons.



## 5. Don't wear these

When you work with food, don't wear these things:

- perfume (chemicals)
- nail varnish (when heated it gives off vapours that can catch fire)
- jewellery (harmful micro organisms can live on them)
  - ear rings
  - necklaces
  - rings
  - watches
  - wrist beads and bangles.



Do not wear these things:



## 6. Don't do this near food

**Don't allow** any of this to happen in the processing or storage room, or anywhere near food.



✗ cough



✗ sneeze



✗ drink



✗ smoke



✗ eat



✗ spit



## 7. When not to work with food

Make sure your food does not get contaminated through you or your workers being sick.

- Don't let anyone work with food if they have cuts, boils, septic spots, burns or bandages.
- Don't let anyone work with food if they have a bad cold, chest infection, sore throat or an upset stomach.

## 8. How to store food

- Use a cooking thermometer so you can check the temperature of food that you're cooking.
- Check that your fridge is set at 5°C or below.
- Only let food stand for a short time and between 5°C and 60°C temperature to keep it out of danger.
- Keep your food above the ground.
- Cover your food with a net.
- If you are sun drying food or smoking fish for storage, keep the food off the ground. Keep flies and animals away.



The correct way to sneeze is onto your shoulder, not into your hand.

### Important

- Stay away from processing and selling food when you are sick.
- Tell your workers to take sick leave when they are sick.



Keep flies away from food.



# 3 Keep your workplace safe

Where can you see workplace dangers? Try to find at least 10.



## Important

A first aid kit should contain sterilised dressings, gloves, cotton wool, water proof plasters and bandages.



## Your safety check

Clothing	
• Apron	
• Gloves	
• Hair net	
• Shoes that protect feet	
• Clothes that won't get caught in a machine.	
Jewellery	
• No bangles	
• No earrings	
• No necklaces	
• No watch	
Fire safety	
• Gas cookers in a safe place	
• The flame can easily be seen when it is lit	
• Insecticides and other chemicals are high up and away from fire	
• Electrical cords are put away when we're not using them	
• No water near electrical plugs	
• Fire extinguisher is in working order and stored properly	
• Buckets of sand to throw over fire	
Water safety	
• No puddles on the floor	
Lift things safely	
• We bend our knees when we lift heavy things	
Keep children safe	
• No children in the workplace for their safety and ours	
No animals	
• No animals in the workplace	
First aid kit	
• First aid kit with the basics that we need	

## Be a food inspector

1. Where do you see good work hygiene and safety and where not?
2. What other things should or should not happen from what you've read in this guide so far? (Some of the photographs have both good and bad practices in them.)

### Example





What things should or should not happen in these pictures?



Roasting shea nuts



Dishing out dough for processing



Pressing of cassava dough



Sorting grain to be weighed

# 4 Smoke and fire

If you work with fire, you know the dangers. Make sure you have a first aid kit in case someone gets burnt. It is bad to breathe in smoke. Smoke can also bring down the quality of your food.



Sit sideways, like these women who are making gari. This protects you from flames, heat and smoke.

A face mask does two things:

1. Protects you from breathing in smoke.
2. Protects the food from you breathing on it.

These cook stoves channel out the smoke from your workplace.



This stove protects you from the flames.

## Be a health inspector

Look at these photographs. Find as many good and bad practices as you can in each photograph.



Your safety check	✓	✗
We use stoves that protect us from flames, heat and smoke		
We channel the smoke away from our workplace		
We sit sideways when we cook with fire		
We wear masks		

### What I need to do

Write here what you need to find out more about, or do, to make your workplace safer and healthier for your business.

## Operating machines

- Do not allow children in the food processing area.
- Train your staff on how to work the machine in a safe way.
- Only allow people who are trained to use the machine.
- Only one person should operate a machine at a time.
- There must be enough space around a machine for the operator to move without tripping over someone or something.
- Don't call someone from behind when they are operating a machine. Speak in front of them. Or wait until they have finished.
- Teach your staff what to do if there is an accident.



### Important

Train staff to be familiar with potential hazards like potentially dangerous machines, and what they should do in case of an accident. Hang charts on the wall near to each machine to show safety precautions.



You are responsible for making sure your equipment is in a good condition.



This grater is not in a good condition. Some of the grater brittles have broken off.



This stainless steel grater is in good condition. It is safe for processing food.

Your safety check		
<b>Cleaning</b>	✓	✗
Do you clean your machines at the end of every day?		
Do you make sure cloths are rinsed and sanitised often during the day?		
Do you make sure that bits of cloth do not get stuck in the machine?		
<b>Fixing</b>	✓	✗
Are any parts of your machines broken?		
If a machine needs mending, have you arranged for it to be fixed?		
Do you need to save up for a new machine?		



# 6 Correct pots and pans

Customers can get very ill from eating food that is prepared in pots and pans that are painted. Paints are chemicals that can give you food poisoning. Paint can get into food from:

- pots being used to cook at high temperatures
- fading into the food
- being broken and chipped.

In the picture, the paint has faded. Where did it go? Some of it went into the food the in-let was used for.



This in-let was painted blue when it was new. The paint has faded from the in-let being used and washed. Some of the paint has gone into the food.

## Be a health inspector

If you were a health inspector, which of these machines or pots would you tell the business to stop using? Which do you think are correct to use?



Which of these are safe?



Your safety check	✓	✗
Do you clean your pots and pans at the end of every day?		
Are any of your pots painted?		
Are any of your pots chipped?		
Do you need to save up for new pots?		
Do you know which pots to buy so that they do not cause food poisoning? If you answered 'no' to the question above, do you know where to get help?		

# Your work surfaces

You must have a sanitation plan for your workplace. If you don't, it means you are not taking your customer's safety seriously. Your business could get closed down.

In this section we:

- look at why you must clean AND sanitise work surfaces
- ask you to do a health and safety check for the surfaces you put food on or near.

## 1. Clean and sanitise

There are two things you must do to stop foodborne illnesses:

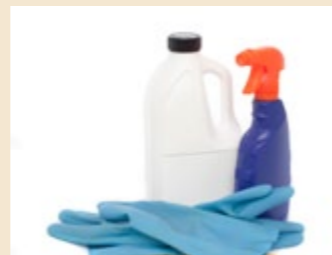
1. Wash your hands and put on clean gloves, apron and hair net.
2. Use clean cloths, detergent and safe water to get rid of dirt and grease from all of your equipment.
3. Use a sanitiser to kill harmful micro organisms like bacteria.

### Examples of sanitisers:

- chlorine solutions (bleach)
- quaternary solutions (quats)
- iodine.

## What and when to sanitise

Clean and sanitise all your equipment and surfaces before you begin work. Do it again when you have finished work.



## Important

1. Read the instructions on how to use the sanitiser before you use it. Sanitisers are chemicals. You must use them exactly as the producers tell you to. The instructions will tell you if you need to wear things like gloves to protect you from harm. They will also tell you how much sanitiser to use. If you use it wrongly, you could poison your food.
2. Keep your detergents and sanitisers on a shelf where they won't be mixed with the food. And where children cannot reach them.



Correct way to clean and sanitise surfaces.

## Your every day sanitation plan

### Each person must:

- take off jewellery
- put on apron
- put on hair net
- wash hands with soap
- put on gloves.

### Wash with detergent

1. Wash all utensils, like knives and spoons.
2. Wipe all surfaces, like cutting boards, tables and floors.


### Sanitise

1. Sanitise all utensils, like knives and spoons.
2. Sanitise all surfaces, like cutting boards, tables and floors.

### Make sure everyone knows:

- how each item must be washed
- how each item must be sanitised
- how to use the sanitiser
- where the sanitiser must be stored in a safe way.



Unsafe surfaces. 



# 8 Waste management

Collect the waste from your production every day in a hygienic way. Rodents and insects, like mice, rats and flies, are attracted to waste. Animals might come to drink it. These all contaminate your food.

- You must drain liquid waste away properly.
- You must take solid waste completely away from your workplace.

## Liquid waste

You need ways to channel liquid waste into septic tanks so that the solid waste is separated from it. Keep the tanks closed to stop contamination. Clear away the solid waste that is left behind.

## Solid waste

Use packets to put solid waste in and tie them securely. Put the packets into bins. Keep the bins covered. Make sure the waste is removed to be burnt or put on landfills.



Waste from agriculture can mostly be used for animal feed and fertilising the soil.



In this photograph a septic tank is properly closed with an aeration pipe. ✓



In this photograph the water tank has been left open. The water has become stagnant. It is very unhealthy. ✗

Find the waste problems and good practices in this photograph.



### Your waste management plan

Liquid waste	Solid waste

# 9 Pack and store

You've harvested your crop or finished processing your food. But if you don't pack and store it correctly, all your hard work and money can go to waste.

## Ten rules

Here are rules about packing and storing food that you need to follow:

<b>Rule 1</b>	First in, first out (FIFO). For example, you have shea nuts that you have just brought in. You must process them right away. When you have finished, process the next raw food that you get in.
<b>Rule 2</b>	Your food containers must not be broken.
<b>Rule 3</b>	Pack your food in clean, safe sacks, packets or containers. This will keep it fresh and safe for longer.
<b>Rule 4</b>	Make sure your sacks are tied tight.
<b>Rule 5</b>	Have a special place where you store food. Don't store your food in the same place that you process it.
<b>Rule 6</b>	Your food storage place must be swept and clean.
<b>Rule 7</b>	Pack your goods on pallets to keep them above the ground.
<b>Rule 8</b>	Your food storage place must be kept dry.
<b>Rule 9</b>	Air must be able to pass through your storage place.
<b>Rule 10</b>	Make sure your foods are kept within the temperature of 5°C to 60°C.



Bagged produce on pallets

## Important

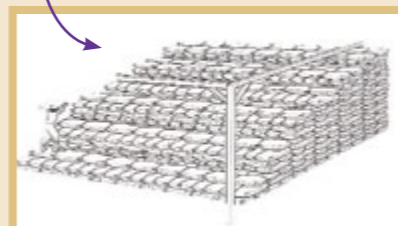
- You can keep paddy rice bagged or in bulk structures. Store them in a cool, dry and ventilated room.
- Do not keep paddy rice that has been treated with chemicals in bedrooms or kitchens.



What health problems can happen because of the way these sacks are stacked?



What problems will the step wise way of stacking sack solve?



## Keep your customers happy

Show your customers you are serious about your business. They will be happy and want to buy from you again.

### Gari

- Pack your gari into polypropylene bags and jute sacks with poly liners to keep it fresh and crisp.
- Label your packages with your business's name.
- Write the date you packaged it.



### Shea butter and other fats and oils

- Keep your fats and oils well packed.
- Store them in a cool, dry and dark place. This will stop them melting and going bad.



### Liquid fats

- Liquid fats like palm oil should be:
  - packed in the right type of containers.
  - kept cool and in a dry place to stop it going hard.



### Your check list: What do you need to do so that you stick to the rules?

<b>Rule 1</b>	
<b>Rule 2</b>	
<b>Rule 3</b>	
<b>Rule 4</b>	
<b>Rule 5</b>	
<b>Rule 6</b>	
<b>Rule 7</b>	
<b>Rule 8</b>	
<b>Rule 9</b>	
<b>Rule 10</b>	

# 10 Transport food safely

Follow these important steps when you transport food:

- Step 1** Clean the truck before you put any food onto it.
- Step 2** The people who load the food on the truck must have clean hands.
- Step 3** Load all sacks carefully so they don't split open.
- Step 4** If you have more than one product they must be kept away from each other. If you don't do this, you risk cross contamination.
- Step 4** Cover the sacks for the journey. They must not get wet.
- Step 5** Make sure no one sits on top of the food. It damages the sacks and the food inside can get contaminated. It will no longer be fresh. It can cause illness and you will lose money.
- Step 6** Unload the sacks very carefully so they don't break.
- Step 7** Take the sacks to a storage area straightaway. They must not lie in the sun. They need to be kept away from animals and people so they stay clean and uncontaminated. Look back at Section 9 on how to keep food stored and packed.



## Be a health inspector

1. What are the problems with how food is being handled in these photographs?
2. Could the food be damaged?
3. What are the risks for the people?



Children must be kept safe from harm. Child labour is against the law!

# 11 Safety with farm chemicals

## Always wear protective clothing

- Always wear protective clothing when you spray crops.
- Don't let chemicals spill on your skin.
- Don't breathe in the gas from the chemical.

## Chemicals and food safety

- Wash your hands well before you eat.
- Don't mix up, or keep, food and chemicals near each other.
- Never use empty chemical containers to store food or drink. It can get poisoned and make you very ill.
- Don't pour left over chemicals into empty food containers. Someone could easily drink or eat it by accident and get poisoned.



### Your food transport plan

Read the steps you must follow to transport food so it does not become contaminated. Make a list of things you need to do to make sure your food is transported hygienically and safely for all.

# Resources

## Original manuscript

This book was adapted, further developed and illustrated from an original manuscript written by Ing. Linda Dari, Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana. The original manuscript acknowledges the following references:

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## Further references used for this book

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Page 3: Global Handwashing Day graphic: [www.cleantheworld.org](http://www.cleantheworld.org). Created by John Terry, October 2014 Accessed: 06 July 2016

Page 11: How to rehydrate. Adapted from: Me, my body, my life (2015) page 20. Published by Soul City Institute & Development Communication

Page 13: How to wash your hands. Adapted from: [http://www.who.int/gpsc/clean\\_hands\\_protection/en/](http://www.who.int/gpsc/clean_hands_protection/en/) Accessed: 15 May 2016

## Photograph acknowledgements

Linda Dari: Cover top right, bottom left. Pages: 6 bottom right; 16; 17 left; 23; 24; 25 top; 26; 27 left; 29; 30 top, bottom left; 31 left and middle; 33; 34 middle right; 36; 39 left; back cover.

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*We hope you find the information and advice in this book useful. You have the power to make changes so that your business becomes known for being professional. More people will want to be your customers. You will earn money to improve your livelihood.*

**For further support contact healthcare centres or food and drugs authorities in your communities.**



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