



**DG's TALKING POINTS AS A PANELISTS AT THE
1ST NIGERIAN FOOD SAFETY AND INVESTMENT
FORUM,**

**SCHEDULED TO HOLD ON 7TH-8TH FEBRUARY,
2017.**

AT THE EKO HOTEL & SUITES, LAGOS.

FOOD SAFETY

- Food safety - practices of preserving the quality of food to prevent contamination and food-borne illness.
- Food safety is about handling, storing and preparing food to prevent infection.
- Food safety is a shared responsibility.
- It requires a steady farm-to-table effort.
- To improve and maintain food safety, we need to develop Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), Good Distribution Practices (GDPs), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and the remaining prerequisite program to cover the farm-to-table spectrum, Good Consumer Practices (GCPs).

BENEFITS OF FOOD SAFETY

- Reduce Food-Borne Illness
- Protect consumers and operators reputation
- Food safety boosts consumer confidence thereby increasing public confidence in modern food systems and food processing.
- Protects consumers from losses and gives value for money.

FOOD SAFETY, THE CONSUMER AND CPC ROLE

The Consumer Protection Council (CPC), is an agency set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria by Act C25 LFN, 2004 (No 66 of 1992) to promote and protect consumers interests in all ramification.

Who is a consumer? As defined in CPC Act Cap 25, LFN 2004, a consumer is an individual who purchases, uses, maintains, or disposes of products or services”.

CONSUMER RIGHTS

- **Right to Safety:** A right to expect that the foods they purchase and consume will be safe and of high quality for their intended use.
- **Right to Choose:** A right to make choices from a wide range of products.
- **Right to Redress:** Consumers also have a right to redress when dissatisfied with a product or service.
- **Right to Information:** Proper information on the product to enable consumers make informed choice e.g food can be safe but if its not properly labeled it can be wrongly used.
- **Right to healthy environment:** Consumers have right to healthy environment i.e result of our consumption does not affect the environment negatively. Garbages derived from food should be well disposed. This will ensure that the environment is preserved for now and for future generations.

CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Consumers should be alert to the quality and safety of the food they purchase and assert their rights in case of infringement.
- Consumers should also ensure that the food they consume is safe, by proper food preparation and safe storage, checking labels before use.
- Formation of consumer associations /NGO for consumer's wellbeing.

ROLE OF CPC/CPC CONCERNS

➤ The Consumer Protection Council is mandated to ensure food safety among others by;

- i. Providing speedy redress to consumer complaints through negotiation, mediation and conciliation. Only CPC addresses redress of consumer complaints.
- ii. Carrying out inspection of factories, warehouses and eateries to ensure compliance with food safety standards.
- iii. Carrying out surveillance and enforcement activities on food products in market place to ensure food sold meets required standard. Surveillance includes proactive/routine and information gotten from consumers. Enforcement is done to remove fake/substandard /expired and hazardous products from the markets.

iv. We also conduct workshops and seminars to create consumer awareness and sensitize manufacturers, farmers and food vendors on food safety. CPC also organizes programmes in our in-house studio and consumer voice to educate consumers on food safety.

v. Conducting quality tests and analysis on products and compelling producers of products and services to adhere to quality standards/specification.

vi. CPC is empowered to implement all laws that concerns consumers. Therefore CPC is empowered to implement other laws of the Government that affects consumers generally likewise in the food sector.

vii. Collaborating with other relevant agencies in elaborating standards of products and also collaborating with UNIDO in capacity building and National Quality Infrastructure Project.

INDUSTRY RESPONSIBILITY AND APPLICATION OF APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY IN FOOD SAFETY.

- The ultimate responsibility for investing the physical and managerial resources that are necessary for implementing appropriate control lies with operators in the food industry.
- Manufacturers should use modern quality management systems to ensure that food processing consistently delivers the desired level of food safety and quality.
- Food processors also have the responsibility to adhere to quality management standards laid down by both National and International Standards Organization (ISO) e.g ISO 22001.
- But the quality of food products also depends on the quality of raw materials and the quality of transportation, storage, and conditions at the point of sale.
- Food Industries operators are expected to use appropriate technology and inputs in food processing.
- Food Industries should support research to improve food safety and advocacy campaign in food safety.

NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN FOOD SAFETY

- In keeping with a main principle that every improvement can be shaped around people skills and expertise, we need to promote the development of competencies and capacity building in food safety from farm-to-table to create a consistent and effective global food system.
- Capacity building will provide us with opportunity to enhance the safety of the multitude of food produced in the country and those imported into the country.
- Regulatory Agencies will also be able to expand their technical, scientific and regulatory capacity for effective regulation.

BENEFITS OF INVESTMENT IN FOOD SAFETY

- No single government agency, private sector entity or consumer association alone can effectively ensure food safety in the globalized food supply chain.
- Investing in food safety can:
 - i. Enhance competitiveness.
 - ii. Ensure fair practices in trade.

- iii. Develop the food sector on a professional and scientific basis
- iv. Promote the country's export trade
- v. Increase in consumer choices, good health and value for money
- vi. Healthy populace increases productivity.

WAY FORWARD IN ENSURING FOOD SAFETY

- i. Harmonization of players in the food safety team.
- ii. Ensure prompt and adequate information sharing amongst members of the food safety team.
- iii. Provision of funds and infrastructure (e.g test kits laboratory equipment etc) for Surveillance & Enforcement, and Laboratory investigations.
- vi. Training of staff and capacity building on new trends in the investigation, surveillance & enforcement on food safety issues.
- v. Joint use of facilities and resources e.g. laboratories and inspection/enforcement activities.
- vi. Massive campaign /Public enlightenment on food safety is needed for attitudinal change of consumers.