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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
BHUTAN FOOD AND DRUG AUTHORITY



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Public Notification on Food Safety Responsibilities of Food Businesses, Importers, and Consumers to safeguard the health and well-being of consumers

The Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) has been receiving an increasing number of concerns regarding the safety and quality of food products available in the market, including concerns raised by the Consumer Protection Office and general public. In view of these concerns, BFDA would like to remind all food businesses operating in Bhutan, as well as individuals and entities intending to establish food businesses or import food commodities into the country, of their responsibility to ensure that all food products placed on the market are safe and suitable for consumption.

Food safety is a shared responsibility, and every food business operator, regardless of the size or nature of operation, must ensure compliance with applicable food safety requirements throughout the food chain, from sourcing of raw materials, production and processing, storage, transportation, distribution, and sale of food products.

All food businesses intending to commence operations are advised to be fully aware of and comply with the food safety requirements applicable to their specific type of food handling activity. The requirements may vary depending on the nature of food products, associated risks, processing methods, and the scale of operation. Businesses are encouraged to seek guidance from BFDA to ensure that appropriate food safety controls are established before commencing operations.

For existing food businesses, BFDA reminds operators to continuously maintain good food safety practices, including but not limited to:

- Maintaining proper hygiene and sanitation practices within food premises;
- Ensuring appropriate storage conditions, including temperature control where required;
- Preventing cross-contamination during food preparation, processing, storage, and handling;
- Ensuring food handlers follow good personal hygiene practices and are adequately trained;
- Maintaining cleanliness and suitability of food contact surfaces, equipment, and utensils;
- Ensuring safe transportation and distribution of food products; and
- Implementing appropriate traceability measures to facilitate effective control and recall of unsafe food products, when necessary.

For food importers, all imported food commodities must comply with the food safety requirements of Bhutan and applicable regulatory provisions. Importers are reminded to ensure that:

- Food products are sourced from reliable and approved suppliers who follow appropriate food safety management practices;
- Imported foods meet the applicable regulation, specification, labelling requirement, and safety requirements of the country;
- Required documentation, including certificates and supporting records, are obtained and maintained as applicable;





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- Proper storage, transportation, and handling conditions are maintained throughout the supply chain to preserve food safety and quality; and
- Imported food commodities are not distributed or sold if they do not meet regulatory requirements.

Food businesses and importers are also encouraged to establish preventive food safety systems appropriate to their operations, including good hygiene practices (GHP), good manufacturing practices (GMP), and other applicable food safety management measures.

Additionally, consumers are encouraged to contribute to food safety by checking labels, expiry/best-before dates, packaging integrity, and storage instructions, and by maintaining proper storage and handling practices. Consumers should avoid food showing signs of spoilage or damaged packaging and promptly report suspected food safety concerns to BFDA, providing relevant product and purchase details to facilitate traceability and appropriate regulatory action.

BFDA will continue to strengthen regulatory oversight, in accordance with the provisions of the applicable food legislation, through inspection, surveillance, sampling, testing, and enforcement actions to protect public health and ensure that food available in the market is safe for consumers.

All food business operators are therefore urged to take proactive measures and work together with BFDA in maintaining a safe and reliable food supply system in the country.

Director
Bhutan Food and Drug Authority
Ministry of Health