

# Questioning how safe the food supply in america actually is

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## **Is the Food Supply in the U. S. Safe for Human Consumption?**

Food is one of the most important wants that is needed by each and everybody in everyday life. Food safety is a very sensitive concept since it poses an enormous risk to human life if not appropriately taken care. Unsafe food causes many ailments, varying from diarrheal diseases to different forms of cancer. On the other hand, a safe food supply supports a nation's economy, other sectors such as trade and tourism, and even contributes to food and diet security. A safe food supply also stimulates a sustainable development. This paper presents an argument as to whether the food provided in the United States of America is safe for consumption as it could be.

### **The Issue of Genetically Modified Foods**

Reports from consumer advocates indicate that 5000 people die every year as a result of food contamination while another 76 million people rendered sick as a consequence of the food contamination. While the consumer advocates advice that the government of the U. S. need to take more action to guarantee the safety of the food supplied in the entire country, less action has been taken, with the new voluntary inspection failing gradually.

Policymakers are a worried lot since natural contaminants could also be a cause of the lack of food safety in the U. S. Natural contaminants could include genetically modified organisms that are present in both pieces of meats and vegetables. It is also said that the terrorists could be taking advantage of the food supply to cause harm to the population of the U. S.

Terrorists can do everything possible to sabotage the food supply of the United States, food contamination included (Hosansky, 897).

While consumer advocates say that the use of genetically modified foods may be another cause of food contamination, companies supplying the genetically modified foods have opposed the idea that the foods are unsafe for consumption by explaining that the foods have been tested more thoroughly before being supplied to the market. Besides, the companies demonstrate that there is no evidence that the genetically modified foods have caused harm to consumers in the past. It is also argued that there are agencies that play a role in ensuring that the GM foods are safe for consumption and the environment as well (Monsanto Corporation.)

Apparently, natural causes of food contamination due to the effect of genetically modified foods are not a genuine cause of food contamination in the U. S. Food safety in the U. S. is mostly disrupted by factors such as food poisoning which is common in most of the deaths and diseases experienced. The GM foods do not influence the food safety in the United States since the agencies responsible for the Gm foods investigate the composition and nutrition between Gm foods and the traditionally obtained foods. Moreover, the companies producing Gm foods have employed qualified personnel that are responsible for regulating the content of the foods so that they do not cause harm to human beings.

### **The Government Action to Improve Food Safety**

Reports indicate that the efforts by the government of the United States to improve its inspection systems, food poisoning has been on the rise in the

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whole country, leading to fear among consumers. Additionally, there has been a better center of attention on at food processing plants to ensure that the pathogens are eliminated. Still, the nation has recorded food poisoning outbreaks over the last few years. Latest reports indicate that there is some progress in the fight against food poisoning, but there are no laid strategies that could lead to total eradication of the whole menace of food contamination in the country. The directors of food safety programs also say that there still exist a lot of gaps in the food safety system, indicating that the government of the United States of America has not done enough to curb the issue of food contamination. With the terrorism threat, the country is exposed to a lot of risks pertaining to its food safety since terrorists hit at the least expected sector of the economy (Hosansky, 899).

Other reports indicate that the federal government is working to reduce the number of diseases related to food borne pathogens that result to food poisoning. It is noted in an article about food safety that the government is providing American consumers and retailers with information on safe food-handling practices. Apart from educating its citizens, the American government has targeted food safety as one of the key objectives of the health sector, a move that is aimed at promoting health and preventing diseases in the United States of America. The initiative that was carried out in 2010 had goals that included reducing by 50 percent the number and rates of infection caused by food borne pathogens , increasing the percentage of the population who apply food-safety practices, and lowering the risk of human exposure to pesticides in food (Fisher and Gale). The initiative put in place by the U. S government provide a counterargument for <https://assignbuster.com/questioning-how-safe-the-food-supply-in-america-actually-is/>

the claims that the ruling government is not fully liable to combating food contamination in the country.

Categorically, the government of the United States has not done much in managing food contamination in the whole country. The issue still raises an alarm since the strategies were only put in place in 2010, to maybe show some sense of responsibility in dealing with the menace. Apparently, the government has to lay down much more strategies that would witness a zero percent in the rates of infections resulting from food poisoning. The government should also do the necessary to ensure that the gaps in food safety system are filled. Such gaps pave the way for opportunists such as the terrorists who would wish to witness a whole community perish due to food poisoning. The Food Safety Modernization Act require that the food safety system is strengthened, an action that is not being entirely put in place by the government. The law does not require actions that are taken after a problem has occurred but in the ways of preventing such problems. The FSMA requires that the food safety hazards are prevented, detected, and the safety of imported foods improved. Miscellaneous provisions are also considered when creating regulatory requirements in the food industry.

### **The Effect of New Legislations to Food Supply**

Advocates look forward to revamping meat regulation although there have been disagreements over the control of certain foods by the government. There are also differences over the controversial genetic frontier of food safety in the U. S. Currently; Scientists can now genetically modify fruits and vegetables as well as livestock and other food animals, but there exist a debate over the safety of genetic modification among lawmakers, food <https://assignbuster.com/questioning-how-safe-the-food-supply-in-america-actually-is/>

safety officials, consumer groups, and the food industry. The dispute is on whether the government ought to regulate the usage of GM foods in the country or not. The food industry in the U. S. argue for regulation of the food imports into the country because they pose the challenge of stiff competition in the food industry, hence exposing the consumers to the risk of poor quality foods that may not be proved by the health officials (Katel, 1040).

Users can avoid GM foods in the grocery store if desired, by checking the labels of the foods. Different countries have their methods of labeling foods as a way of regulating the supply of different foods to the market. Since the GM crops provide farmers with the means to improve the yields under weed and insect pressure, most farmers would opt for them if offered the opportunity. Within the United States, the government requires the labeling of ingredients but that does not help a lot in preventing consumers from reaching the products. The American Medical Association re-affirmed that there is no particular justification for special labeling of foods that contain GM ingredients. Organizations support voluntary labeling and consumer rights to choose products based on their preferences since forced regulation within the country's borders does not help in fighting food contamination (Krisoff, Barry, et al. 3).

Control of the GM foods ought to be done selectively since not all companies producing the food in the U. S provide poor quality foods. Regulation of imports would be a perfect way of reducing the number of incidences of food poisoning in the U. S. For the companies within the country, voluntary labeling would be the best solution since it would even create a sense of

responsibility in the management of different companies. In doing so, the Food Safety Modernization Act would be obeyed since public health would have been considered.

In a nutshell, the genetically modified foods are part of the foods supplied to the American market but they do not pose a threat to the food safety of the U. S. as thought by many people. The common cause of diseases and deaths that are as a result of food safety is food poisoning. Government regulation of the importation and labeling of foods helps to some extent in dealing with the issue of food safety because the threat of terrorism is also real. The government of the U. S. therefore, still has an enormous task of ensuring that food safety is no longer a concern.