

# Example of food safety essay

[Law](#), [Security](#)



## **Abstract**

Food is a necessity because it is essential to human beings' survival. For this reason, food production is a crucial function in modern life because processes and initiatives determine the quantity and quality of food produced and distributed to consumers. Food production, however, is not an easy process. In some cases, food consumed by people not only cause illnesses or various diseases but also lead to death. As a result, producers around the world adopted various measures to ascertain the quality of food and the health and safety of consumers.

Solving food safety is a variable process primarily because issues that threaten this are diverse. The research focuses on identifying current and relevant issues that threaten food safety particularly improper food handling, preparation, and storage practices, and the strategies and practices that organizations employ in order to address food security that affect the health and wellbeing of people. The discussion focuses on the problems in food safety and their implications on human life.

After presenting issues concerning food safety, the discussion also includes recommendations on how people would be able to address the foregoing problems to ensure that they consume high quality food. Solutions to food safety problems include increased awareness about food handling and storage, as well as increased reliance on organic food. Science could also contribute to the foregoing problems by introducing non-harmful ways to produce plant and animal food sources and offset the outcomes of climate change on agriculture and food production.

## **Consumption and Food Safety**

One of the most important issues when it comes to food and consumption is safety. Food is a basic necessity because it perpetuates the survival of human beings. Nonetheless, food could place people's lives at risk. People die after consumption if food contains deadly organisms such as bacteria or virus, poison, and other harmful substances. Some sources of food in nature are also prohibited for consumption because they are harmful to people's health. For the foregoing reasons, food safety is important when it comes to curbing incidences of death and illness due to food.

Aside from the presence of deadly organisms on food, other reasons or factors that contribute to food safety issues include improper handling and storage of food. Food items formulate bacteria, for instance, when they are kept under conditions that do not favor the preservation of the food's quality. Some food items must be frozen, while others must be heated or cooled. Food must also be stored properly to prevent bacteria from formulating on the surface of the food.

The foregoing problems have plagued the food production industry for many years. Proposed solutions include the inclusion of ingredients in food to improve its quality and prevent it from decomposition or contamination. Other solutions include standards or guidelines and their implementation in food preparation particularly in restaurants and other food establishments. In recent years, however, one of the primary social issues related to food safety include the quality of food. Various health institutions raised this issue because of the increasing number of illnesses caused by low food quality. Some of these illnesses are also serious and the leading causes of death

around the world. Illnesses such as cancer, heart diseases, and diabetes, for instance, are outcomes of poor food quality. Proof to the alarming rate of unfortunate circumstances linked to food safety is the growing number of cases involving food poisoning or the onset of diseases due to consumption of unsafe food. The number of articles about food safety published over the years (See Figure 1) have significantly increased over time, thus, signaling the growing number of issues related to safety and intensifying the need to immediately address the problem.

### **Cultural and Sociological Relevance of Food Safety**

Since the objective of the research is to view a specific issue from the cultural and sociological perspective, we are going to explore some of the issues linked to food quality. Aside from the content of food, this issue is also cultural in nature because it is tied to the food consumption practices in other countries. In a discussion about food quality, Kent (2012) pointed out that food choices often affect our health. Hence, in countries where people's choices are scarce or are limited to specific types of food following cultural practices such as religious traditions, the quality of their food and consumption differs from that of others. Aside from religion and culture, lifestyle and beliefs as well as personal preferences as influenced by news and science are also some of the factors that affect people's choices when it comes to food consumption.

Kent mentioned Jews and Muslims as examples. Due to their religion, Jews and Muslims follow restrictions when it comes to food consumption. Both groups are averse to the consumption of pork, which may be an outcome of their religion rather than health concerns. Nonetheless, because of Jews and

Muslims' aversion to pork, they consume better food choices because pork is excluded from their diet. Due to safety issues concerning pork, such as contaminations with various bacteria (Bottemiller, 2012) as well as drugs and other substances that may harm human beings upon consumption (Consumer Reports, 2013), Jews and Muslims are saved from various hazards that may arise if they consumed pork (Kliebenstein, n.. d).

Aside from Jews and Muslims or other groups that set restrictions about their diet, other people that choose to live a healthy lifestyle are those that are also at lesser risk of being affected by food safety issues. Often, these people learn about food production so they would be aware about the origin, production, and handling of their food. People living a healthy lifestyle prefer less processed organic food handled delicately to preserve the freshness and the nutritional content of these food items. Furthermore, they learn how to prepare food so they would obtain nutritional benefits of organic food. Overall, people that follow rigid cultural or lifestyle practices when it comes to food consumption consume healthier and therefore, safer food products.

## **Food Security and Food Safety**

Kent (2012) also raised another issue concerning food safety and quality. One of the main problems regarding food is security. Various factors threaten food security especially during the next decades. The increasing population threatens food supply since it would be inadequate in meeting the needs of billions of people around the world. Another factor affecting food security is climate change. Global warming, the continued warming of the earth, contributes to climate change. Climate change consequently affects agriculture. Unpredictable rain patterns bring drought in farm lands

particularly in Africa because unlike before, long gaps between downpours dry the land damaging plants in the process. It is for this reason that starvation and malnutrition persist in various African countries as well as other regions experiencing climate change. To offset the outcomes of overpopulation and climate change on food supply, as well as issues concerning food security, scientists introduced the genetic medication of plants and animals as one of the solutions to produce more food and meet consumption demand and ease food security around the world (Schmidhuber & Tubiello, 2007).

## **Genetic Modification of Food**

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) were injected with specific substances that would allow them to produce food even under difficult conditions or in bigger and greater amounts than organic food sources. Through genetic modifications, for instance, poultry are able to produce more eggs. Moreover, poultry mature faster than free range chickens. In this way, poultry producers would be able to meet the demand for this product. Some animals such as salmon are genetically modified to grow to bigger sizes than the average size of this species. Genetically modified plant sources, on the other hand, also mature faster than organic plants and yield bigger produce. Although the genetic modification of plants and animals is well-intentioned, the outcomes of which challenge food safety because of the possible impact of GMOs on people's health.

While some people embrace genetic modification as one of the viable solutions to food supply and security issues, others question it because of health implications. People who protest against companies or organizations

that produce GMOs not only argue against the ethical implications of genetic modification but also raise the issue of health. Although some studies prove that GMOs are healthy and safety for consumption, hence their widespread distribution and production, some research studies link consumption of GMOs to diseases including cancer. For this reason, genetic modification is a food safety issue because it could possible affect people's health in the long run.

In one study, researchers fed laboratory rats with GMOs for a long period of time. After doing so, the researchers then studies the subjects' anatomy and discovered that the rats' continuous consumption of GMOs damaged their major organs - the kidney and liver (Walia, 2014). Moreover, the content of GMOs greatly disrupted the subjects' hormonal levels. Although supporting research studies are scarce as of the moment, the study was published in a reputable journal publication. If we are to base our conclusions about GMOs on the research study, we may then surmise that people's continuous consumption of genetically modified food could also eventually lead to human kidney and liver damage, as well as hormonal imbalance.

### **The Use of Drugs in Food Production**

In relation to food security, many farmers rely on different substances or drugs to increase their yield. Illness is one of the reasons, for instance, that lower the number of poultry and livestock production. To solve the problem, farmers administer drugs to animals in order to increase their immunity to diseases (Consumer Reports, 2013). Although this practice is not questionable per se because using antibiotics helps increase the life span of animals and ascertain their maturity prior to production and distribution,

antibiotic use is a food safety issue because of its implications on food consumption. Prior to distribution, some farmers feed livestock and poultry with substances to flush out antibiotics from their system. Nonetheless, this is not always the case as this process is not full proof.

Scientists studied cooked meat to determine if they contain drugs or substances. Research outcomes show that traces of drugs were found in meat even if it was cooked (Consumer Reports, 2013). Furthermore, scientists found antibiotic-resistant bacteria on the same product. The implications of which are far-reaching and alarming because if drugs and antibiotic-resistant bacteria remain and survive in cooked food, human beings would consume it. People would be affected by veterinary drugs injected to livestock and poultry and worse, they would ingest bacteria and get sick but will not be able to treat their illness with antibiotics. If the bacteria ingested by people is deadly, then they would pass on because medicine would not work against antibiotic-resistant organisms.

## **Solutions to Food Safety Issues**

As formerly noted, food safety relates to culture and sociological practices including lifestyle. Jews and Muslims who avoid consuming pork are less at risk for contracting diseases brought about by consumption of meat.

Individual preferences also affect food consumption and therefore, safety. Hence, one of the solutions in maintaining food safety is people's adoption of positive habits or activities, even if borrowed from other cultures or religions, towards the goal of consuming healthy and safe food. Awareness plays an important role in accomplishing this objective. People must be aware of food safety issues so that they would be more welcoming of various options that



would help them prepare and consume healthier and safer food options.

One of the more relevant outcomes of the research is the urgency of solving food safety issues. In the foregoing discussion, we pointed out the increasing need to resolve food safety issues because of mounting evidence about risks involving food. Figure 1 shows the significant rise of cases and articles about food safety issues, thus, highlighting this as a pressing global issue. People can become more aware about issues, and therefore, adopt better strategies to safeguard their health and wellbeing by reading these cases and articles. Online and physical news and sources carry different stories and information about food safety. Some articles show proper food handling, preparation and storage while research studies illustrate the impact of certain food items on the health and wellbeing of people. By reading articles related to the issue, people would know how to prepare and handle food properly, and what to do to ensure that they consume healthy and safe food products. Awareness in people could also enable them to come up with solutions themselves and contribute to the body of literature and solutions to address food safety. Scientific and technological developments may also be introduced to address the foregoing problems. Since scientists introduced genetic modification, they could also conduct research studies in order to determine solutions to the detrimental impact of GMOs on human beings' health. Addressing food security through genetic modification is essential but the health and safety of consumers around the world is paramount. Scientists should therefore prioritize human health over the discovery and development of processes and strategies to increase the number or size of food produced over time. Recommendations, therefore, focus on continued research about food safety

and the link between studies in this field to food security in order to prevent practices and strategies in food production that are detrimental to the health of human beings.

Figure 1. Number of Articles in Google News Archive Related to ‘ Food Safety’

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