

## IMPROVING FOOD SAFETY IN UKRAINE

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Everyone, including governments, food industry, and consumers has an abiding interest in saving food. Fortunately, Ukrainian food safety system generally does good job of protecting consumers from food safety hazards. Although there are many cases of food-borne illness annually in Ukraine, the overwhelming majority are mild and involve only minor discomfort and inconvenience. Despite increasing public anxiety about food safety, it is exceptionally rare for debilitating illness or death to result from the consumption of unsafe food in Ukraine.

Yet there is no reason to be complacent. There is possibility of improving Ukrainian food safety performance. Although the precise figure is impossible to calculate due to current data limitations, the health care costs and the lost of productivity attributable to food-borne illness are surprisingly high. When high-profile outbreaks- or even increased fears of outbreaks - occur, businesses can experience significantly reduced sales, high recall costs, and lower consumer confidence. All of these not only threaten Ukrainians' health, but can negatively affect the economic competitiveness and viability of the food industry on which we rely on to meet our nutritional and dietary needs.

In the light of our analysis, which estimat

es of the sources of food safety risk and effectiveness of the government risk management activities, industry, and consumers, we offer the following potential government, industry, and consumer actions that may help to improve food safety outcomes in Ukraine:

- provide SME restaurants and food service operators with management advice;
- encourage better behaviour among consumers;
- harmonize private standards to protect the public interest;
- make greater use of technology to improve visibility and traceability;
- add resources to address food safety risks due to globalization.

**KEY WORDS:** food safety, health, food industry