

The Southern Pulse Newsletter



World Food Safety Day Edition

June 2022

World Food Safety Day– June 7, 2022



World Food Safety Day on June 7, 2022 will focus on the theme, “Safer Food, Better Health” and will draw attention and mobilize action to prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks and improve human health.

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“Food Safety is Everybody’s Business”

Regional Director-Michael Bent



On Tuesday, June 7, 2022, Jamaica will join the rest of the world in celebrating World Food Safety Day, under the theme, “Safer Food, Better Health”.

It gives me great pleasure to commend the Environmental Health teams within the southern region, who continue to go above and beyond to mobilize action to prevent, detect and manage food-borne risks.

The commemoration of World Food Safety Day, since its establishment by the United Nations in 2018, has become an anticipated event as it raises awareness on food safety and its importance to the health and well-being of the population.

The theme, “Safer Food, Better Health” brings into sharp focus the important role that safe food plays in ensuring human health and well-being.

Food Safety is that concept, principle and scientific application of procedures, guidelines and activities that need to be applied at various stages of food production.

In Jamaica, foodborne diseases continue to have huge impacts on public health and the economy. One in ten people fall ill after eating contaminated or unsafe food. Unsafe food results in many food borne illnesses and contribute to poor health conditions. This underscores the importance of greater personal responsibility, as food safety is everybody’s business.

Safe food is important for good health and I use this opportunity to encourage our environmental health teams to continue to empower each food handler to make informed decisions that will protect them and their families from ill-health.

On this World Food Safety Day 2022, I laud your efforts, programmes and initiatives and encourage you to continue to perform with excellence and commitment.

“Food Safety is Integral to any Country’s Sustainable Development”

Regional Technical Director-Dr. Vitillius Holder

Food Safety is integral to any country’s sustainable development. Globally approximately 1 in 10 persons experience ill health due to food contamination. This results in an increased burden on the health care system and can be compared with the impact of Malaria and HIV on the public health system. Over 200 foodborne illnesses have been identified but many of these can be prevented if there is adherence to the five keys to safer food.

The Southern Regional Health Authority has more than four thousand certified food establishments with many more coming on stream. The empowerment, monitoring, enforcement functions of the dedicated inspectorate within the Southern Region is not sufficient to prevent foodborne illness within its jurisdiction because food safety is not only the role of farmers, food processors, business owners, food handling businesses but the responsibility of all, from the farm to the table as well as from the table to the mouth or point of entry to the body.

It is with this in mind that the Southern Regional Health Authority embraces the 4th World Food Safety Day 2022 and looks forward to June each year when the entire world join force to increase awareness to the importance of food safety and the role of everyone in the fight against foodborne illnesses and to empower and motivate into action the acceptance and practice of the five keys to food safety.

From the child to the elderly, from the farm to the table from homes, schools, community groups, work places we all have a role to play . On the 7th June 2022, I invite you to join with Southern Regional Health Authority and make the reduction of foodborne illness a reality because Food SAFETY IS EVERYBODY’S BUSINESS.



“Food Safety is of Critical Importance to Food Security”

Regional Environmental Health Officer– Carleen Mitchell-Hennie



As we celebrate this year World Food Safety Day, under the theme “**Safer Food Better Health**” the Environmental Unit of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) saw it fit to highlight the importance of food safety and how important it is to practice good food hygiene along with those measures that will ensure that food once consumed will aid in the nourishment of the body and will not lead to any deleterious health effect.

It is estimated that 600 million, representing almost 1 in 10 people in the world fall ill after eating contaminated food and 420, 000 die every year, resulting in the loss of 33 million healthy life years. Food safety is of critical importance to food security and the welfare of people across the globe because of its aggravating impact on the public health, economic and social status.

There is also a renewed concern on the impact of antimicrobial resistance and diseases which are transmitted from animals to human beings by virtue of some of the former being sources of food. The key problems facing the informal sector of the food industry are a lack of appropriate guidance and support; a lack of easy to inspect risk-based procedures; and some gaps in educational and training support.

In the Southern Region we place a lot of emphasis on food safety and overall compliance, we have a robust training and inspection programme which continue to bear fruits in this regard, commendations to our hardworking Public Health Inspectors who continue to blaze the trail and to go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that consumers are protected against Food borne illness and its deleterious effects on health and well-being. Also special commendation to the members of the Regional Food Safety Committee for their vision and hard work to make the day and its activities realized.

Let us join hands and heart together to spread the word as we commemorate this year’s World Food Safety Day, “**Safer Food Better Health**”, taking a line from the good book which says “it’s what comes out of a man that defiles him, however in food safety/ food hygiene it is what goes in that can result in him being defiled.

Thanks and every success.

"Food Safety Cuts Across Several Disciplines and Sectors"

Regional Food Safety Coordinator– Dahlia Plunkett

The United Nations established World Food Safety day in 2018 as an integral move to demonstrate the importance of food safety and to bring awareness to the public through various channels.

This year's theme is "Safer Food Better Health". Food safety is an important component of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs,). Within our Jamaican context, food safety is important to our 2030 vision for our country being a place where we can live, work, do business and raise healthy families.

Food safety is a critical feature at each stage of the food supply chain from production, to preparation, storage and transportation. Any significant breach to our food safety and security systems will undoubtedly impact the health of our people as the risk of food hazards will increase.

During the global pandemic, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) reported that, "811 million people were chronically undernourished as the pandemic swept the world, halting economic activity, disrupting supply chains and deepening poverty". While this may appear as a food security issue only, the goal is to have safe food available and safe food accessible which can be utilized in a manner that will best impact on the nutrition of our people. If food received is not safe then the likely result is the occurrence of foodborne illness. The global statistics reflects the challenges with food borne illnesses, as many fall ill annually due to the consumption of food that has been contaminated in one form or another.

It is therefore necessary to have monitoring systems in place to help provide the public with confidence in a safe food supply. The Food handling Certification Programme for food handlers and the Food Handling Establishment Certification Programme are two monitoring mechanisms that are implemented under the Ministry of Health and Wellness. One thing to note is that there are other Government ministries, agencies and organizations that provide food safety monitoring. However, more can be done together as we utilize a One Health approach to food safety. Food safety cuts across several disciplines and sectors. More and more, we have embraced this concept and have sought opportunities to have greater collaboration with all stakeholders with responsibility for the safety of food in Jamaica.

For this World Food Safety Day celebration, the Public Health Inspectors and specifically Food Safety Officers, Coordinators and Veterinary Public Health Inspectors are participating in a number of events some of which include other stakeholders and partners. Special emphasis is being given to the Capacity Building Seminar held June 6, 2022, and the World Food Safety Day Road Show being held today, June 7, 2022. The Public Health Inspectors from the parishes of Clarendon, Manchester and St. Elizabeth are coming together on this World Food Safety Day in the town of Mandeville and are engaging the public on key food safety messages and tips.

We encourage your continued support in bringing awareness about food safety to those you meet, not just today but every day.



“Food Safety is Everybody’s Business”

Chief Public Health Inspector, Manchester-Charmaine Palmer Cross



It is with great pleasure that I endorse this newsletter in celebration of World Food Safety Day. A very important day to recognize. The tagline is fitting as food safety is indeed everybody’s business.

Food is important to everyone, as outside of the fact that it provides the requisite nutritional values, it is a very important part of our culture as it brings people together.

The fact that food brings people together it means that if it is not prepared and managed in a safe manner, there lays the possibility of negative health effects such as food-borne illnesses. For this reason, food safety forms a very important part of our everyday lives.

As a parish we recognize the need for greater monitoring and enforcement actions as some persons have become complacent and are therefore comfortable to operate with substandard conditions which result in public health breaches. We have therefore broadened our scope and have utilized our resources in a manner that will

create positive impact of the food safety programme. As a result, we are seeing greater compliance and in situations where this is not the case, we continue to use the tools available to us to increase compliance.

As we celebrate World Food Safety Day in Jamaica under the theme *Safer Food, better health* with the tagline *Food safety is everybody’s business*, let us continue to encourage the population to :

- Purchase food from credible sources
- To seek information when in doubt
- To check labels for expiry dates and
- To report food related illness to the authority

As we venture on these activities, I want to commend the Southern Regional Health Authority Environmental Health team for participating in this year’s activities. The Coronavirus Pandemic has restricted how we celebrate for the last two years and so it is very welcoming to be able to be a part of this celebration.

We hope this event will bring forth the kind of public awareness necessary to make the desired impact.

The Manchester Health Department Environmental Health Unit wishes for you the greatest success as we celebrate World Food Safety Day.

"Field to the Fork" Process Should not be Taken for Granted"

Chief Public Health Inspector, St. Elizabeth-Everod Lewis



Daily I watch people purchasing food items from all types of food handling establishments across the parish and they confidently purchase knowing that the products are of high quality.

Population increase has caused us to create new ways of increasing food supplies based on the demand. It can be established that between 1450-1700, world exploration and discovery led to an exchange of foods that greatly influenced agriculture and nutrition in the western world. Noting also the changes in and advancing capabilities of science and technology by 1800, the stage was set for a remarkable change in agriculture.

When I reflect also on the pioneers who have laid the foundation in ensuring that the processes of making sure that Safe Food reaches the public is amazing. The concept from "the field to the fork" is a process that should not be taken for granted. The players in this progression must be lauded noting the work and effort that is placed at the various stages. Today food complies with regulations and standards, nutrition, palatability, and

packaging.

For Jamaica, the Food Handling Regulation guides all those who are a part of the industry. The guidelines are clear and it eliminates bias.

One critical role is the training of Food Handlers. This provides the knowledge for all Food Handlers working in the food industry that is essential in ensuring that safe food reaches the public. The constant monitoring by our public health inspectors at the various establishments solidifies our positive impact on food safety and health promotion.

We must also recognize that there are sometimes break down and this results in foodborne illness which can lead to the worst-case scenario, death. If this should happen evaluation of the breakdown in the system must be analyzed and the necessary structure put in place to correct any challenges.

The Vision 2030 Development Plan speaks clearly about a healthy country and food is an important part as such we cannot overlook Food Safety in our country's future.

I want to continue to encourage all people including companies working in the food industry to continue to perform at the highest standard and continue to improve yourselves. Each generation should improve the standard of living for the next.

"We all Have a Role to Play to Ensure That Food is Safe and Wholesome"

Acting Chief Public Health Inspector, Clarendon-Ricardo Woolery



It is with great pleasure that I extend greetings on the occasion of World Food Safety Day to everyone. This year, 2022, the Public Health Inspectors of the Southern Regional Health Authority are celebrating World Food Safety Day under the theme “Safer Food, Better Health”.

We have long been able to make the association between health and wealth. However, not many persons would consider that the safety of the foods consumed can have a direct impact not only on ones wealth, but also on their quality of life. Hence, I believe that this year’s theme is not only fitting but timely.

The United Nations (UN) has declared World Food Safety Day to draw attention to the adverse health effects of producing and consuming contaminated food and water. Food Safety is everyone’s responsibility. Every year, nearly 600 million people fall sick and approximately 420,000 persons die globally due to the consumption of contaminated food, be it with bacteria, viruses, parasites, toxins, or chemicals.

An estimated three million people worldwide, both in developed and developing countries die annually from water and food-borne diseases combined. In many cases illnesses and death could have been avoided. Therefore, to guarantee food safety it requires the participation and

training of persons at all levels in the food production chain, and this can be achieved through targeted interventions and inter-sectorial collaboration.

Ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion, food safety is important as it helps to protect consumers from the risk of food borne illnesses and even death. Let us use this designated forum and day to create awareness among our families, friends, and business community and policy makers, as we all have a role to play in ensuring that food, from the farm to the fork, is of a safe and wholesome quality.

Happy World Food Safety Day!

Food Safety Happenings in St. Elizabeth

Public Health Inspector, St. Elizabeth, Antoinette Blake



According to the World Health Organization (WHO), unsafe food causes 600 million cases of foodborne diseases and 420,000 deaths worldwide each year.

These diseases are non-discriminatory and will therefore affect persons of varying age, gender, socioeconomic backgrounds, and health statuses. Therefore, food safety is the responsibility of everyone, from government officials to

producers and consumers alike. In Jamaica, various initiatives have been instituted to increase food safety and security across the island. Specifically in St. Elizabeth, the 'bread basket' parish, the public health inspectorate work assiduously to improve food handling practices through proper surveillance and the implementation of multiple health education and training programs and projects within the various health districts.

Health education is recognized globally as an important aspect of health promotion as it increases the knowledge of the recipients which potentially results in the required behavioral changes. With this in mind, a bulk of the information on food safety is provided through food handlers training sessions. Some health districts within the parish have as much as four (4) days of training each month with each day consisting of at least two sessions. Additionally, specialized training sessions for groups such as fish and other seafood vendors as well as those working in the restaurant and catering industries are conducted. These provide information tailored to the operation of these high risk establishments in an effort to minimize the risk of contamination and hence food borne illnesses. Information is also disseminated during routine and compliance inspections as improper practices of the workers or operators are addressed at this point.

Throughout each year the Public Health Inspectors try to implement several programs or projects to improve the sanitary conditions and practices in food handling establishments. There are two major ongoing projects that have recently commenced to aid in the improvement of food handling establishments especially those with high risk potentials.

One such project was undertaken by PHI Oneika Robinson in Middle Quarters, St. Elizabeth. It was noted that over the years, high risk food establishment operators along the main road in the 'shrimp county' have been operating at the minimum public health standard. PHI Robinson, identified the need for improvement to allow for better pest control and dust management which is usually associated with these road side establishments. As a part of her

project the operators were instructed to install mesh that is very small in diameter at all entrances or openings of the establishments to allow for proper ventilation while preventing pest, such as flies, and minimizing dust from entering the establishment.

There were approximately twelve (12) of these establishments that required improvement, of which five (5) have completed all the work necessary to improve their sanitary statuses. The remaining establishments through guidance and health education are expected to complete the necessary improvements by the end of 2022. Another project which was recently started by PHI David Rowe involves the provision of water storage receptacles to slaughter facilities and small dairy farms in areas of the parish where running water is not easily accessible. PHI Rowe, through intersectoral collaboration, has made contact with an organization that will provide these plastic drums and another group who will assist with their transportation. Operators of these establishments will then pipe the water inside the establishment from the storage receptacles. Approximately eleven (11) drums were donated; however an additional ten (10) drums are to be procured as the project continues.

Food safety is everyone's responsibility and until persons play their part in keeping food safe from the farm to the fork then and only then will the incidences of food borne illnesses decrease. Notably, efforts to increase food safety awareness in the parish is a continuous process and can only be achieved through proper surveillance, health promotion and sensitization activities.



“Food Safety, Food for Thought”

Public Health Inspector, St. Elizabeth, Tizania Thomas



How many times have you eaten from your favorite restaurant or cookshop and realize a day or two after that you have stomach aches and maybe even diarrhea? Most Jamaicans would say “a jus likkle gas man and mi will drink some ginga tea.” Sadly this may not be so, and instead you were the victim of a food bourne illness. Food bourne illness is a disease resulting

from consuming contaminated food which may be due to food safety breaches. Food safety includes the preventive practices at all points of food-related operations such as receiving, storing, processing, handling, and distributing. Food safety practices ensure the elimination of food safety hazards at all operational steps and ensures that only safe foods are delivered to consumers.

It has been my observation that many food handling establishments focus mainly on food safety in relation to the physical food itself. Attention is not normally given to other components such as proper food storage and food handling practices to include time and temperature controls, cleaning and sanitizing of utensils and surfaces, as well as the use of food safe sanitizers. Additionally, general cleaning is often a sore point for some of these establishments. It is important for everyone to realize that there are several components of food safety, all of which are important in ensuring safe food. Refrigerators and freezers should be cleaned frequently and there should be physical separation between raw foods and ready to eat foods. The proper arrangement of food during storage plays an important role in preventing contamination and cross contamination.

Food items should never be stored with toxic chemicals such as cleaning supplies and pesticides. Cupboards, storage areas and shelves should also be cleaned frequently and not only when restocking. This invariably brings up another point; what chemicals can be used for cleaning food contact surfaces? It is in most of our nature to use highly scented chemicals, but we need to ask several questions. Is this chemical food safe? Is this chemical effective? One must ensure that when cleaning food contact surfaces, whatever chemical is being utilized is food safe and preferable without strong fragrances. This is due to the fact that some food items may absorb these scents. It is also important for the instructions attached to each chemical to be followed meticulously.

There should be no mixing of bleach and vinegar to “make it stronger”, or using multipurpose highly scented disinfectants on food contact surfaces. Cleaning supplies should be bought from reputable sources with labels on usage and other information intact. It is also important to determine the appropriate concentration and contact time. These things may seem trivial but what is the point of cleaning when it is ineffective? If it's not done properly, you run the risk of unintentionally contaminating your food.

The next aspect is the troublesome time and temperature control and abuse of high risk or potentially hazardous foods. These foods are those that will spoil very easily and so require specific temperature ranges for their maintenance. Raw meat and poultry, cooked meat and cooked poultry, cooked rice, gravies, cut fruits and cooked vegetables are some of the most common ones we come across. How many times have you forgotten your cooked rice or even cooked rice and peas on the stove overnight, then noticed a slightly off or sour smell in the morning? Or realized that the gravy was a little bit slimy? What about your watermelon, was it a little soggy a couple hours after you cut it? Two factors are critical at this point; firstly high-risk foods should not remain at room temperature (the danger zone) for more than two (2) hours.

Bacteria is ubiquitous, found everywhere, and food is no exception. Not only can eating food left too long in the danger zone make you ill, but in severe cases death can occur. You might ask the question; wouldn't reheating the food take care of this problem? Yes, it could if done properly. However, what if it is a large quantity of food being re-heated several times as I hear some operators practice based on conversations. This poses a problem due to the fact that food should only be reheated once and there is also the possibility for spores to be formed which are not easily destroyed by our normal cooking temperatures. Food wastage also occurs when foods are not properly stored and must be thrown out prematurely. It is imperative to keep cooked foods hot at 63 °C, cold foods such as your vegetable salads between 4.4 °C - 1°C and your frozen foods at -18 °C to make them last longer while reducing the possibility of acquiring a food-borne illness.

In conclusion, food safety is very broad and involves several areas and not only the physical food. Ensuring food safety goes beyond buying wholesome food and cooking it. Any factor you can think about that will impact the food is a component of food safety. Start practicing how to properly store and handle foods. Also, maintain a safe food environment and you may realize that you experience stomach bugs less and cut expenditures at the doctor. You may also find yourself saving money spent to replace food as you cut down on avoidable food wastages. Just food for your thoughts.

“The Food Handler and the Food Handlers’ Permit”

Public Health Inspector/Zone Supervisor, Clarendon, Gabrielle H. Jackson



“I really don’t have time to waste. I have a lot to do. It is not easy to come and wait for so long at this place. I am presently losing business,” said Mrs. Charlie. “I feel the same way,” whispered a lady who was sitting beside her in one of those long benches at the Health care facility. “Every year I have to come here. Why can’t they just give us the test?” Every year

they keep telling us the same things. Well now and again it changes. But the point is I already know how to keep my shop clean. They put us through so much for this little piece of paper. As a matter of fact I don’t know where to find the one I had. I put it under a counter in the shop and I can’t find it since then. “

“Well, this is mine I can’t even take it out of my purse it is very dirty. It got damaged by my little boy. He used his pencil and made marks all over it”, chuckled Mrs. Charlie. “But I had to come and get another one for this one has expired and I am looking a loan and the bank asked me to come and get it. I don’t really want their card. The bank said all I need is the receipt and I am good to go”. “These people are so lucky, once I get this receipt I won’t come back” replied the lady on the bench.”

“Good morning everyone one,” said the Public Health Inspector as she stood before the Food Handlers who were there anxiously waiting for the Food Handlers Clinic to start.

“Good morning Miss”, can you just give us the test without teaching the lesson. I am late for work”. “Me too”, shouted another person in the back of the room.

“Well it cannot be done in that manner.”

The Public Health Officer then proceeded to explain the procedures for obtaining a food handlers’ permit.

A food handler is anyone who works in a food business and who either handles food or touches surfaces that are

likely to be in contact with food such as cutlery, plates and bowls.

As such, a Food Handler should always remember that their food handlers’ permit is their passport for working in the food trade. It is just as important as their passport that is being used to enter into another country and thus should be treated with the same level of regard.

The permit should be kept safe and available for inspection when your public health inspector comes to visit you. The permit is renewable every year as stipulated in the Public Health Food Handling Regulations. This is not a decision made by a Public Health Inspector. It is the law and should be adhered to. Special attention should therefore be given when the time comes to apply or reapply for this special passport. Remember there are implications for not having a valid Food Handlers permit and you are caught working in a food establishment.

Recommendations:

Food Handlers should be properly educated from a National level example via Public Media on information that will assist them in being more aware of their importance in our present society and how crucial it is for them to make every effort in being a good Food Handler. This cannot be done and done effectively only when a Food Handler or prospective Food Handler attends a Food Handlers’ Clinic. Advertisements can definitely assist food handlers in being more aware and alert as it relates to food safety.

As Public Health Inspectors we appreciate all our Food Handlers and will do everything in our power to facilitate, collaborate and work effectively and efficiently to ensure that safe and wholesome foods are served in our country.

More Than What ‘Meats’ the Eye

Acting Veterinary Public Health Inspector, Manchester, Tennesia Plummer-Byfield



To the average person the duties of a Public Health Inspector (PHI) includes conducting inspections at various food establishments to ensure that they satisfy the Public Health requirements. The profession is often stereotyped as the profession of government employees known for effecting closure “locking down” those facilities which fail to meet requisite standards. However, it is key to note that the responsibility of being the vanguard for the health of an entire population whether at the community, national or international

level lies greater at the ultimate decision of a PHI and that is the weight of the responsibility carried by each public health Inspector. The question therefore should be, besides what is often seen or perceived by the public, what are the other core functions of the Public Health Inspector and how important are these duties for you and your family?

The responsibilities and functions of the Public Health Inspector are inarguably truly diverse covering multiple disciplines within the profession. A few notable mentions including vector control, veterinary public health, occupational health & safety, assessment of quality standards for drinking water, recreational water (pools) and wastewater, the inspection of residential premises, tourist establishments, food establishments, institutions (inclusive of schools, prisons, healthcare facilities), port facilities and vessels (aircraft or ships), epidemiology and still this listing is incomplete.

For those persons who were unaware of these functions might be a moment of awe however, to the Public Health Inspector the wide expanse of these duties serves as a constant reminder that **to whom much is given much is indeed required**. Among all these duties include one function that incorporates so much more than what meets the average eyes and that is the veterinary public health function. On World Food Day the obvious focus is on food safety and with the present threats to food safety and food security globally all focus is on food however it is pivotal to identify an essential food for focus and this is Meat.

Meat primarily is a vital source of nutrient for the body and serves as a great source of protein which is needed for the growth, function and development of the body. It provides the body with essential nutrients such as Protein, Iodine, Zinc, Omega 3, Vitamins K and B12. To meet the growing demand for meat in the parish, last year the Public Health Inspectors of Manchester inspected over 1.18 million pounds of meat (Manchester VPH Report, 2021). Meat Hygiene is that element of veterinary public health which involves the inspection of food animals presented for slaughter (antemortem inspections) and the inspection of the carcasses presented for human consumption (postmortem inspection). The primary goal is to ensure that healthy animals are provided to produce meat and animal products for human consumption that are free from contamination, disease, pathogens or chemicals that could result in illness or death of the consumer. Meat Hygiene is therefore an arm of Veterinary Public Health that truly

embodies the holistic concept of ensuring food safety from the “Farm to the Fork”.

Another common knowledge about PHIs is that they conduct routine meat inspections at various slaughter facilities and provide the legal stamp of approval on those carcasses identified fit for human consumption and condemn or “dash weh” those that are likely pose a threat to the health of the consumer. However, what often goes unseen or unnoticed is the routine use of laboratory analysis for assessing quality assurance and safety of meat and animal products. Routine Sampling/ Surveillance is a regular function of the veterinary public health unit not only for meat but also other animal products such as milk, eggs, seafood, poultry, cattle blood organs or tissues from all food animal species. Routinely these samples are submitted the Veterinary Services Division, the Government Chemist or the National Public Health Laboratory for microbiological, or chemical analysis.



One might ask why do sample cattle blood? As part of the Brucellosis Brucella Program of Jamaica routine blood samples are collected from female cattle (cows and heifers) to assess for the presence or absence of the Brucella bacteria. Brucellosis is one of many zoonotic diseases (diseases transferable from animals to humans) under surveillance by the PHI. It is transferred to humans who encounter infective animals or animal products contaminated with the Brucella bacteria. The bacterium is commonly found in cattle, goats, sheep, pigs and dogs but can also be found in other animals. Spread can also occur by eating or drinking unpasteurized milk or milk products.

Meat Samples or animal products submitted to the laboratory are assessed not only for the presence of a disease or disease-causing agent (pathogen) but for presence of food preserving agents (for example, formaldehyde in fish used as malpractice), antibiotic residue, product quality (for example, butterfat content in milk), occurrence of adulteration (for example, addition of water to milk) among other many elements. The data from these laboratory analyses along with inspection findings equips the Public Health Inspector with sufficient information needed to allow for sound judgement and disposition in determining the sanitation or health status of a food establishment or the safety of a product intended for sale for human consumption. This is often the “unseen” functions of the PHI critical for food safety and health of the general populace.

Public Health Inspector to “lock down” a facility or “dash weh” a product or pass such as being satisfactory is guided by strategic protocols, a legislative framework and scientific/evidence-based knowledge. The unseen functions allow for public health dispositions to be made that are formed from an informed, ethical and scientific perspective and not merely based on perception, personal preference or subjective reasoning. So, the

next time you purchase a piece of meat at the market place, meat mart or local grocer remember to look for the Public Health Inspector’s stamp of approval and or the valid license of the food establishment and when it is found remember to trust that the Inspector’s disposition for its availability and accessibility goes way beyond what ‘meats’ the eyes.



Creative Piece

“Safe food a weh wi wah fi nyam”

Safe food a weh wi wah fi nyam
 Nuh matta if it in a bag or a pan
 Mi wah sitten fi drink fi keep off di heat
 Mek sure yuh nah store it wid di meat

Mi wah sitten hot fi bus lickle gas
 Fiyah must be blazin jus ask di ras
 Keep hot food above 63 degree
 Fi keep yuh gut from running free

Mi notize di pink health certificate
 Put mi mind at ease seh yuh ting set
 Yah hang it proudly pon yuh wall
 Dat a di proof seh yuh ting well tall.

Is a big big ting fi be compliant
 Tek no chance wid PHI giant
 Dem deh people deh nuh ramp at all
 Some big business dem lock – I can recall

Notice one ting wid Ms Honey
 She wash her hands even after she tek money
 Food borne disease is a real ting
 Even if yuh hav fi tek off de ring
 Protect de brada and sista
 All who have dis yah business yah

By K. Lawson and B. McKay
 Manchester



World Food Safety Day Opening Ceremony & Capacity Building Seminar

Photo Highlights

On Monday June 6, more than 30 Public Health Inspectors gathered at the Tropics View Hotel in Manchester for the opening ceremony of World Food Safety Day and also a Capacity Building Seminar, which was held under the theme, “Safer Food Better Health-It takes all of us Working Together”.

The Public Health Inspectors used the opportunity to engage with partners as it relates to food safety and how best they can work together in the interest of public health. Please see below photo highlights.



Regional Food Safety Committee Members



Nelesha Brown-Wint
Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector
St. Elizabeth



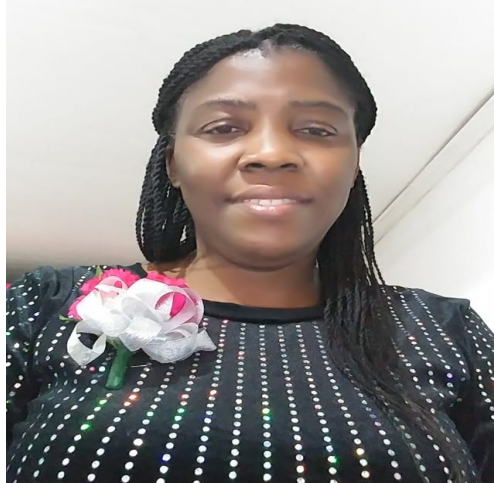
Shaneek Kelly
Public Health Inspector
Clarendon



Dahlia Plunkett
Regional Food Safety Coordinator
SRHA Regional Office



Jana-Gaye Taylor
Public Health Inspector 3
Clarendon



Deborah Lindo-Black
Veterinary Public Health Inspector
St. Elizabeth



Shanon Douglas-Francis
Veterinary Public Health Inspector
Clarendon



Barbara McKay
Veterinary Public Health Inspector
Manchester



Tennesia Plummer-Byfield
Veterinary Public Health Inspector
Manchester

