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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Health & Wellness Commemorates World Food Safety Day

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The Ministry of Health & Wellness is today observing World Food Safety Day under the theme “Safe Foods Now for a Healthy Tomorrow.”

In 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the day, considering the global burden of foodborne disease that affects individuals of all ages, in particular, children and persons living in low-income regions.

The World Health Organization estimates that every year more than 600 million people fall ill and 420,000 die from consuming contaminated food. This only represents a small portion of data as accurate surveillance in the developing world is limited.

Presently, there are no studies of COVID-19 transmitted through food. However, it has raised awareness on some important issues that can compromise food safety such as hygiene practices, antimicrobial resistance, zoonotic diseases, and climate change. Tied into the current challenges, it is necessary to reflect on the commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 3, which promotes ensuring healthy lives and the wellbeing of all persons of all ages. This outcome can be achieved through safe production, transportation, storage, purchasing, preparation and consumption. Therefore, Belizeans must work together with the government.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness is one of the regulators for food safety in Belize. The ministry monitors food establishments on a regular basis for compliance with the Food and Drug Act, which includes food safety.

Food safety is a shared responsibility. Safe food leads to immediate benefits for the people, country and economy. Having the availability of safe and healthy food leads to a healthy working and growing population. Practicing food safety in everyday activities at home, while purchasing at the street side vendor, supermarket and restaurant will eliminate foodborne illnesses.

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