

FDA CREATES AND TRAINS FOOD DESK OFFICERS IN THE REGIONS

As part of the Food and Drugs Authority's (FDA) efforts to strengthen its regulatory activities, a nationwide training has been organized for Food Safety Desk Officers at the various FDA Regional Offices to ensure that the activities of Food Safety Management is harmonized nationwide to promote the safety of food products across the Country. The training took place from the 14th-18th January, 2019 at the True Vine Hotel, Kumasi.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) one out of 10 people fall ill every year from eating contaminated food due to compromised food safety and another 420,000 people die each year as a result of eating these contaminated foods. Children under the ages of 5 years are the highest susceptible age group with about 125,000 of them dying from food borne diseases. As such, this situation requires constant monitoring and rapid response to food safety events through the implementations of interventions.

In view of this, the FDA decided to create Food Safety Desk officers in all the regions to ensure prompt and timely responses to food safety issues.

The Food Safety issues to be handled by the Food Desk Officers include but are not limited to the following;

- Inspection and Registration activities of Restaurants, Food Joints, Street-Vended Food, Catering Facilities and Caterers.
- Maintaining liaison with MMDA's to ensure dissemination of Food Safety information at the District Level.
- Planning and conducting Consumer awareness Campaign and education programmes on Food Safety Issues.
- Responsible for the exchange of Food Safety alert notification from the Food Alert Systems (INFOSAN) and their investigations
- Liaise with Food Safety Management Department (FSMD) to investigate and respond to emerging food safety issues in the region that may or may not surface on social media.

The Food Safety Desk officers are also to collaborate with each other, state agencies and other stakeholders, especially the Ghana Health Service to establish food borne outbreak response teams in the regions for monitoring food borne diseases.

In all, twenty -six (26) participants made up of Regional Heads and Food Safety Desk Officers from each region attended the training programme.