

REGULATION OF STREET FOOD VENDING BY THE FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY

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The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) has embarked on an exercise of training Environmental Health Officers of the District Assemblies to assist in the regulation of Street Vendored Foods. The exercise is part of FDA's mandate to ensure the protection of public health and safety with regards to the consumption of street vendored foods. The first phase of the training was held at the Church Hall of the Presbyterian Church (Ebenezer), Osu, from 6th -7th June, 2017.

Street foods are defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as "ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and or sold by vendors and handlers especially in streets and other similar places of immediate consumption or consumption at a later stage without further processing or preparation." This definition includes fresh fruits and vegetables which are outside authorized market areas for immediate consumption.

The FDA over the years has collaborated very well with the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the regulation of Street-Vendored Foods (SVF). The collaboration has mainly been in the form of a joint inspection by the FDA and Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) within the Districts. Food safety infractions identified within the SVF industry include, but not limited to, the following:

- Food prepared too far in advance of service
- Cross contamination from raw to cooked foods
- Cooling food too slowly
- Inability to reheat food to a high enough temperature to destroy food poisoning bacteria
- Storing cooked food at ambient temperature
- Infected food handlers

During the first phase of the training programme seventy three (73) Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) in the Accra Metropolitan Area were trained. The programme will be extended to EHOs in the other MMDAs in the Country. The FDA believes that

the training programme which is tailored to address the food safety challenges in the SVF industry will not only promote good food handling practices but most importantly help prevent foodborne diseases and safeguard public health.