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Food Safety System in Republic of Georgia

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Public health depends critically on the safety of the food supply, and every government has to protect that supply. This is also true of the South Caucasus nation of the Republic of Georgia. Food plays a big part in the culture and economy of the country, which has a rich and varied culinary legacy.

The Republic of Georgia is struggling to join European Union due to the government's started implementation of international food safety systems. The country has improved its food safety system significantly over the past few years, which has had a beneficial effect on both the economy and the health of its citizens. Even though changes started there are still a lot of problems. Yet, with so many small-scale food producers, scarce resources, shoddy infrastructure, and being in the conflict-affected area Georgia still faces a difficult problem in assuring the safety of its food supply.

The Republic of Georgia's food safety system is the subject of the thesis, with a focus on the difficulties it faces and potential solutions. An overview of Georgia's food production, import/export, the need for food safety regulations, and the numerous domestic and foreign food safety authorities working in the nation are all included in the literature study. Along with the topic of foodborne illnesses, risk assessment activities for food safety, food security, and safety issues are also covered.

The analysis is supported by a review of the current literature and interviews with significant Georgian food system players. In order to evaluate consumers' understanding of food safety and their experiences with various food products, such as home-canned food and sauces and meat and dairy products, the study includes a survey. There is also used personal experience during the study, internships, and work periods.

The thesis also examines the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic and the war on food safety system, and a comparison of Georgia's system with one in another tiny European nation.

The recommendations section makes proposals for ways to increase Georgia's system for ensuring the safety of its food supply, including raising public awareness and education, tightening up food safety laws, and upgrading inspection and monitoring procedures.

The thesis comes to the conclusion that while Georgia's food safety system has many challenges, there are still areas for growth. Georgia can improve its food safety system and guarantee the health and welfare of its population by putting into practice practical measures.

On the positive side, the nation's system for ensuring food safety has significantly improved. The National Food Agency (NFA) was established as part of recent major improvements and reforms to Georgia's food safety system. Today even small producers should have HACCP system and NFA is auditing them. The NFA has developed a system for quickly and efficiently responding to outbreaks of foodborne illness. This entails carrying out epidemiological studies, locating the outbreak's origin, and putting precautionary measures in place to stop the disease from spreading further. Moreover, they are posting some results of their activities on the website.

The Georgian government has also improved its food safety system through cooperation with international bodies like the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Despite the improvement, there are still a lot of problems in the country. Food safety problems mostly include consumer understanding, homemade canned food and sauces, meat fraud, pesticide residues, poor food handling and storage practices, and safety regulations.

The NFA, the organization in charge of enforcing food safety laws, frequently lacks the money and resources required to effectively perform its responsibilities. This may lead to insufficient testing, inadequate testing, and inadequate training for industry employees. The NFA, particularly in rural regions, has a limited ability to oversee and control small-scale food producers and vendors. This may result in the sale of tainted or unsafe food items, which poses a serious risk to the general public's health.

Despite the NFA's outreach and education initiatives, many Georgians are still ignorant of the significance of food safety and the best ways to avoid contracting foodborne illnesses. This could result in a lack of desire for safe food products and help unsafe practices continue. According to survey majority of consumers thinks that they are no very aware of food quality risks. There is a high amount of consumers who still prefer to buy products from small producers who aren't controlled by government.

The thesis highlights the value of teaching the general public and small producers about food safety practices. Small producers can be taught how to handle, store, and prepare food safely through workshops, seminars, and training sessions. Community involvement initiatives can also inform the public about food safety and encourage the consumption of food that is produced locally. It is possible to teach food safety to schoolchildren by including appropriate subjects in their curricula.

In order to efficiently carry out food safety procedures, regulatory organizations must be established, and cooperation between stakeholders is necessary. In order to encourage the exchange of knowledge and best practices, it could be a good idea to coordinate the growth of private organizations like the Association of Grain Growers. For small producers to achieve food safety regulations, technical assistance and resources are also crucial. Last but not least, to assure the safety and quality of the raw materials coming from a war zone, it is necessary for the government to inspect them during the conflict. Long-term stored raw materials may be hazardous to the public's health and safety.

Overall, the thesis emphasizes how crucial it is for Georgia to increase food safety as part of its development and journey toward Europe. The objective is to develop a system for food safety that is effective, efficient, and open to everyone, and that supports public health and trust in the food supply.