

**Food Safety Strategies: Managing Reuse of Deteriorating Cooking Oil****Main strategy**

Success is based on the following: actions to prevent hazards of consuming fried food and minimize risks to the public; enhance knowledge that helps to make the issue clearer; and use academic research findings as the basis in which laws, rules and regulations can be established and serve as tools and guidelines to reach the set objectives.

Need to create awareness and understanding among health development partners about the problem caused by the reuse of deteriorating cooking oil and coordinate research-oriented cooperation between academic partner networks and other actors concerned including the people sector, health volunteer networks, food preparers, local government organizations, agencies and public organizations that have something to do with consumer protection, operators that manufacture cooking oil, biodiesel oil manufacturers, mass media, and Government Pharmaceutical Organization.

Move to ensure that there are changes which lead to the correct use of cooking oil; and enhance knowledge and awareness through regular and efficient use of public media based on practical oriented academic and technical knowledge.

**Strategies**

The undertaking to bring about consumer food safety – **Managing Reuse of Deteriorating Cooking Oil** – consists of five strategies as follows:

1. Strategy of making the locality safe from the reuse of cooking oil
2. Strategy of assuring that there are socially responsible operators
3. Strategy of developing overseeing measures and legal action
4. Strategy of developing a body of knowledge for management purposes
5. Strategy of creating awareness in the society

**1. Strategy of making the locality safe from the reuse of cooking oil:** Local government organizations are to take the following action:

1.1 Set the agenda as part of the provincial development plans and 3-year and 1-year local development plans; include it as one of the organizational indicators to ensure an active drive in every area; pass local bylaws to serve as an operational tool of the locality; support and honour those with outstanding accomplishments to motivate others together with measures for legal enforcement.

1.2 Act as lead agencies to make food operators in the area under jurisdiction change the cooking oil before it deteriorates and becomes a health hazard; have in place clear plans of action and budget since reused deteriorating cooking oil is not suitable to be in the food cycle and consequently must be managed by turning it into raw material for fuel production or other suitable forms; and work in a cluster format and with the civil society sector in line with the food safety policy.

1.3 See to it that reused deteriorating cooking oil is processed into biodiesel oil for alternative energy, the undertaking of which can be done by themselves or by supporting other agencies to do so as may be appropriate; and ensure that local government organizations including other public agencies use biodiesel in the work under their jurisdiction to save costs,

e.g. in the operation of garbage collection trucks and grass mowers, as well as processing reused deteriorating cooking oil into other useful products such as soaps and candles.

1.4 Initiate the collection of reused deteriorating cooking oil from various places in the areas under jurisdiction to ensure no wasteful disposal, especially disposal into public drainages which will cause clogging and affect the environment.

1.5 Should promote the creation of an assistance cycle of operators, for instance, major operators helping the smaller counterparts by providing knowledge, acting as role models, and supporting research among others.

**2. Strategy of assuring that there are socially responsible operators:** Operators who manufacture and/or use cooking oil work together to come up with measures for consumer protection against deteriorating cooking oil as well as measures to keep it from entering the food cycle and to campaign for the good of networks as follows:

2.1 Jointly launch campaigns and disseminate knowledge to operators and consumers by funding activities to disseminate knowledge to manufacturers/distributors, vendors and consumers through various channels; prepare areas for knowledge dissemination at fried food selling points and areas for cooking oil examination; disseminate knowledge to consumers via labels and advertisement media; and sell new cooking oil at a welfare price to agencies/organizations that participate in the campaigns.

2.2 Be part of the networks to examine, oversee, and ensure quality of cooking oil at the enterprise level by using technology to manufacture quality cooking oil; check the quality of the oil used as raw material in the manufacturing of cooking oil; check the quality of the oil used during the food frying process; develop standards, examination methods, and tools in the use of cooking oil; prepare equipments and methods for protection against the danger of fume from the cooking oil during frying; and prepare reports of the results of random checking of the cooking oil used in the food frying.

2.3 Get rid of the oil that has deteriorated as follows: (1) oil sellers and buyers have an agreement not to allow it to come back to the food cycle and monitor the progress, (2) the oil is sold to buyers with a license for waste disposal, (3) the oil is used to produce biodiesel or processed for other uses, and (4) the oil is given or sold to local government organizations or fuel companies to produce biodiesel oil.

To ensure that the deteriorating oil does not re-enter the consumption process, the following actions can be adopted. Contracts are made between sellers and buyers of the deteriorating oil not to allow it to re-enter the human food cycle. The deteriorating oil from industrial plants is sold to buyers with license for waste disposal issued by the Department of Industrial Works. The Ministry of Industry conducts investigation and monitors to ensure that buyers of deteriorating oil do not return it to the human food cycle. The deteriorating oil is used to produce biodiesel or processed for other uses or given/sold to local government organizations or fuel companies for the purpose of biodiesel production.

2.4 Conduct other support activities, e.g. develop networks to communicate any query about the safe use of cooking oil for frying food, announce individuals/juristic persons for exemplar behaviours, make no re-use of deteriorating cooking oil as a standard for good market, and disseminate the information in various mass media.

**3. Strategy of developing overseeing measures and legal action:** The Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, local government organizations, Office of the Consumer Protection Board, and Consumer Protection Police Division, Royal Thai Police work together as follows:

3.1 Amend the Public Health Act and Food Act as well as issuing local bylaws that are appropriate and timely to changing situations and that can be realistically enforced for consumer safety.

3.2 Check to strictly ensure no reuse of deteriorating cooking oil. When it is found that there are business activities to bleach the used deteriorating oil or there is any other action that makes food unsafe, or the deteriorating oil is resold to the public for consumption, speedy investigation must be made to find the wrongdoer(s) and collect evidence to take action against them as a deterrent measure.

Take speedy and strict action. Check to ensure no deteriorating cooking oil is sold. When wrongdoing is discovered, find businesses that buy used deteriorating cooking oil, have it bleached or do anything that makes food unsafe for the purpose of re-selling it to the public for consumption. Evidence must be gathered to take action against these wrongdoers.

#### **4. Strategy of developing a body of knowledge and technology for management purposes**

4.1 The Ministry of Public Health academically/technically supports the work of local government organizations, e.g. training on examination of used deteriorating cooking oil by test kits, information on health hazards of deteriorating cooking oil, and relevant laws.

4.2 The Government Pharmaceutical Organization produces test kits for examining reused cooking oil at an economical price and distributes them to various agencies for use in checking the safety of the cooking oil, while the Ministry of Public Health is to urgently transfer the technology of the test kit production to the Government Pharmaceutical Organization and put in place an agency responsible for overseeing the quality and standard of the test kits.

4.3 The Ministry of Energy acts as the lead organization together with the public and private sectors in providing academic and resource supports to local government organizations or communities that are ready to undertake the processing of reused deteriorating cooking oil into alternative energy biodiesel in an integrated manner, including the examination of raw material, equipment and manufacturing process, the examination of the quality of biodiesel by the community, the safety and environmental conservation in the processing, especially the training of technicians of local government organizations and representatives of the community on the assembling of biodiesel production machines and skills in quality biodiesel production in the community.

The Ministry of Energy coordinates the cooperation with the public sector (e.g. education institutes) and the private sector to undertake in an integrated manner biodiesel production (e.g. examination of raw material, equipment, production process, examination of the quality of biodiesel by the community, safety and environmental conservation in the processing). Academic and resource supports are also given to local government organizations or communities that are ready to undertake the biodiesel production, including the training of technicians of local government organization on the assembling of biodiesel production machines and skills in biodiesel production in the community.

#### **5. Strategy of creating awareness in the society**

5.1 Every public agency, state enterprise and state organization acts as a role model in overseeing shops that sell fried food including kitchens in government places and state agencies, see to it that no deteriorating cooking oil is used and campaign to educate the general public and operators through various media including community radio, television, local newspapers, publicity material of various organizations, using short, compact and easily understood messages.

5.2 Directly relevant public agencies, e.g. the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Commerce, and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, require their agencies at every level to have plans to prevent and manage health and environmental risks caused by used deteriorating cooking oil for public consumer protection, and the Public Sector Development Board includes this as an indicator of public performance to ensure serious drives and creates incentives by giving awards to people with outstanding work.

5.3 The Ministry of Education takes action as follows:

1. Launch educational campaigns about the reuse of cooking oil to children and youths by incorporating the issue into its curriculums and urging them to pass the information on to their families for greater awareness.

2. Require education institutes to oversee shops that sell fried food on their premises to ensure no use of deteriorating cooking oil and encourage the establishment of banks for used deteriorating cooking oil in well-equipped schools that will collect the used cooking oil for safe management in cooperation with local government organizations.

5.4 Public agencies and funds such as Thai Health Promotion Foundation support and strengthen the work of the people sector involved in health-related consumer protection by providing academic/technical and resource supports and other amenities.