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**“FOOD SAFETY IN UZBEKISTAN: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS”**

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## **Annotation**

This thesis explores the state of food safety in Uzbekistan in the context of ongoing reforms and public health priorities. The work analyzes the key problems related to hygiene, regulatory enforcement, and infrastructure, and offers potential solutions such as modernization, education, and international collaboration. It emphasizes that a safe food supply is critical to public health and national development.

**Keywords:** Food safety, Uzbekistan, hygiene, public health, regulations, HACCP, infrastructure, traceability, foodborne illness.

## **Introduction**

Food safety is one of the most important public health concerns in the modern world. It is directly connected to the wellbeing of the population and the economic stability of a nation. In Uzbekistan, a country with a rich agricultural tradition and a rapidly developing food industry, ensuring food safety is not only a health issue but also a strategic priority. The government has made efforts to reform its food safety system, but challenges remain. This thesis aims to examine the food safety situation in Uzbekistan, identify major obstacles, and suggest practical measures for improvement. These include upgrading infrastructure, aligning with international standards, and increasing awareness among both producers and consumers.

## **Main Body**

Since gaining independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has been working to create its own food safety system suited to its economic and cultural realities. The government has passed essential legislation, including the Law on Food Safety, and created specialized institutions responsible for monitoring and controlling food quality and hygiene. However, the implementation of these laws is still uneven across regions.



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In rural areas and traditional markets, poor sanitation and lack of cold storage contribute to the risk of foodborne illnesses. Many small producers are unaware of modern food safety standards such as HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points), which are widely accepted internationally. As a result, their products may not meet the necessary health requirements, limiting both domestic safety and export potential.

Another significant problem is the weak traceability system. In developed countries, digital traceability helps track food items from farm to table, allowing authorities to identify sources of contamination during outbreaks. Uzbekistan is still in the early stages of developing such systems. Furthermore, laboratory facilities and inspection services are often underfunded and outdated.

Public awareness also remains low. Many citizens are unaware of basic food safety practices such as washing hands, separating raw and cooked foods, or storing perishable items at proper temperatures. In some rural communities, food is still stored using traditional methods that do not guarantee safety.

Despite these challenges, progress is being made. Pilot projects have introduced improved inspection methods and food testing laboratories. International organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), have collaborated with Uzbekistan to provide training and modern equipment. The government is gradually adopting international norms, which may help boost consumer confidence and facilitate trade.

Efforts to improve food safety education in schools and universities are also expanding. The younger generation is increasingly exposed to global food standards and consumer rights. This cultural shift plays a key role in long-term improvements in food safety.

### Conclusion

Food safety in Uzbekistan is a critical issue that requires coordinated efforts from the government, the private sector, and civil society. Although the country has made substantial progress in terms of policy and institutional development, practical challenges such as weak enforcement, limited infrastructure, and low public awareness still hinder overall effectiveness.



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To address these issues, Uzbekistan should prioritize education and training, especially for small-scale producers and food handlers. Investment in laboratory infrastructure and digital traceability systems is also essential. Additionally, international cooperation can accelerate improvements by providing technical assistance and sharing best practices.

By making food safety a national priority, Uzbekistan will not only improve the health of its people but also strengthen its position in global agricultural trade. Safe food is not a luxury; it is a fundamental human right and a key component of sustainable development.

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