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Safety Practices in Livestock Management as a Tool to Improve Nutrition, Health, and Economic Growth

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Across global emerging economies, livestock is a vital component of a diverse, nutritious, resilient food system, and will continue to play a key role in reducing malnutrition and hunger. Animal-sourced foods contain a variety of bioavailable nutrients,¹ and consumption is proven to correlate positively with improved childhood growth.² As diverse diets that include animal-sourced foods are of high importance to nutrition, childhood health, and economic development, food safety in handling livestock products is increasingly essential. Small and medium sized food enterprises that have capacity to prioritize food safety, referred to as Growing Food Businesses (GFBs), are key to driving a culture of safety for animal-sourced foods.



Goat Transport in Nepal; Photo credit: Richa Lamichhane.

processing, and fermentation, which, if handled and stored sanitarly, reduce risk of foodborne illness in addition to adding diversified income streams for producers. Although proper cold chain and processing facilities require investment, they can benefit producers by reducing food loss, mitigating food contamination, and increasing market access and value.

BD4FS works to create scalable food safety practices in animal-sourced foods, including goat products in Nepal. Nepal recently released the National Food Safety Policy of 2019, and the Food Hygiene Bill of 2021, which has improved the regulatory framework of food safety. Still, enforcement of existing food safety policies is underfunded, and therefore inadequate to monitor risk. The difficulty of government inspection for many diverse retailers and processors across the country makes creating safety practices on a business level all the more important. In the Kathmandu and Chitwan food corridors, the BD4FS team has partnered with several GFBs in the goat meat sector to design food safety training, identify existing cold chain technology, and implement feasible hygiene practices. With improved safe handling of animal-sourced foods, GFBs become more reputable in emerging markets, are able to share best practices through cooperative networks, and are more likely to attract investment for further safety capacity. Co-designing safety interventions with GFB partners allows the solutions in animal-sourced food chains to be locally relevant, product specific, and sustainable on a long-term basis. To address consumer food safety concerns around traceability, BD4FS will explore potential for certification, documentation, and reporting processes to issue recalls for contaminated product. As consumer demand for nutritious animal-sourced foods continues to grow, as will the importance of ensuring market solutions for safety and traceability across each step of the food system.

¹ Balehgn, M., Mekuriaw, Z., Miller, L., Mckune, S., & Adesogan, A.T. Animal-sourced foods for improved cognitive development, *Animal Frontiers*, Volume 9, Issue 4, October 2019, Pages 50-57, <https://doi.org/10.1093/af/vfz039>

² Headey, D., Hirvonen, K., & Hoddinott, J. Animal Sourced Foods and Child Stunting. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Volume 100, issue 5, 2018, July 31, Pages 1302-1319, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1093/ajae/aay053>.

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