

April 6, 2015 CDC Ebola Response Update

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Laura Burnworth] We know there has been some concern during the Ebola outbreak about the safety of the U.S. food supply. The most important thing to know is that you *cannot* get Ebola from food grown or legally purchased in the U.S. Also, food and drinks imported into the United States from West Africa are safe to eat and drink.

Hi, I'm Laura Burnworth, a health communication specialist who works on foodborne diseases.

[Matt Wise] And I'm Matt Wise, an epidemiologist who also works on foodborne diseases. Today, we're talking about Ebola and food safety in the United States.

[Laura Burnworth] Here in the U.S., Ebola isn't spread by eating food. No one has ever been infected with Ebola from foods imported into the U.S. And foods produced commercially haven't transmitted Ebola anywhere in the world.

[Matt Wise] In Africa, some Ebola outbreaks have been associated with contaminated bushmeat, which are wild animals hunted for food. How Ebola was spread, however, whether through butchering, handling, or eating, is unknown.

[Laura Burnworth] Bringing bushmeat into the United States is illegal and subject to a fine as high as \$250,000. Bushmeat found at U.S. ports of entry is confiscated and destroyed.

[Matt Wise] Some people have been concerned about eating in restaurants owned or operated by people of West African descent. People living in the U.S. who are from West Africa are *not* at greater risk for Ebola than other people living in the United States. In addition, recent travelers to the region, regardless of their country of origin, are **monitored** by public health officials for signs and symptoms of Ebola for 21 days after arriving in the United States.

[Laura Burnworth] There is also no evidence that Ebola has been spread through food handled by an infected food worker. However, any food worker with symptoms, such as vomiting or diarrhea, should not handle food.

[Matt Wise] Remember that food and drinks imported into the United States from West Africa are safe to eat and drink.

[Laura Burnworth] For more information about food and Ebola, visit cdc.gov/ebola.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.