

## **FOOD VENDOR UNDER SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME TRAINING ON FOOD NUTRITION**

The Ablekuma West Municipal Assembly Department of Agriculture organised a training on Food Nutrition for Food Vendor of the School Feeding program in the municipal. The training was held on Wednesday, the 19<sup>th</sup> of August at the Assembly Hall of the Ablekuma West Assembly Office. The training was facilitated by Madam Bertha from the Regional WIAD Officer.

The objective of the training was to;

1. The importance of food to the human body.
2. Identify food nutrients and how to plan a meal that is a balanced diet.
3. Identify what food is best based on the age of the consumer.
4. Stress on food safety from the farm, market and vendors.
5. The role of Agriculture and their link with vendors.

20 people participated in the training. 18 participants were caterers and 2 participants were from the District School Feeding Program. The purpose of the training was to educate food vendor under the school feeding program on food nutrition so school children consume highly nutritious and safe food to protect their health when they attend school. Food vendors were educated on the different nutrients in food and their benefits to the human body. They were advised that when planning a meal for someone they have to consider factors like the age, health or activeness of the end consumer for example preparing fried rice with red meat for a hypertensive person is not wise because of its oily content, they rather need more healthy food like kontombire and yam or rice. The fried rice will rather suit children who are active and will burn the fat easily.

The facilitator also indicated that they are planning a Food Guide Plate. This involves getting a local means for measuring ingredients added to food whiles preparing a meal without using measuring cups so it will be easier for vendors who do not have access to measuring tools.

They were also advised to know the food stuff and how to cook the food stuff so they do not losses nutrients from it. For example over cooking kontombire causes nutrients to become less. The vendors were also told that there were some fruits or vegetables on the market that have different features or characteristics from the local food and because of that people do not patronise these new foods. Madam Bertha explained that these new features were as a result of genetic modification and that these foods are not harmful when consumed.

We could not end the training without talking about food safety through the value chain of the life cycle of the produce. From the farm to storage, to processing and even at the market, the safety of food through how they are handled, timing and quantity of chemicals applied to food stuff, the sanitation or place for processing is paramount to ensure that

what we consume is healthy and has no negative health effects on people that consume it. To cut cost of production vendors were told to use food stuff that are in season for example not prepare gravy stew when tomatoes are scarce but choose kontombire which is on the market and more nutritious and also prepare local dishes that children are used to from home.

The link between the agric officers and vendors was also touched where the agric officers can assist vendors identify farms or markets that undertake good agricultural practices to ensure the food they purchase are of good quality and safe.

At the latter end of the training an exercise was held where vendors identified the best food for children to consume from choosing between waakye, plantain and beans and rice and tomato stew.

The training ended on a good term with vendors suggesting a practical training be added to make them better understand the topic.

## PICTURES





