

3. Food and microorganisms:

Microorganisms have great importance and impact on our lives, but not always in a pleasant way.

They are fundamental for obtaining some food products, but are also the main cause of most cases of food and cultivar deterioration.

Aside from this, they also play an important role in food poisoning, as they are the main cause of outbreaks and referenced situation.

There are many factors that influence the growth of microorganisms in foods, if they do not produce the same effect on the growth of microorganisms, they all must be considered when trying to prevent the occurrence of food intoxications.

There are many types of microorganisms of different forms and more or less complex structures. Bacteria, molds, and yeasts are, among all, those that generally have a greater impact on food deterioration.

In what concerns foodborne illnesses bacteria are without doubt the main agents.

Many factors contribute to the presence of microorganisms in foods, the endogenous presence and cross contaminations are the factors most pointed out as being "sources" of microorganism in food.

If we add nutrients (these exist in all foods), -time and inadequate storage temperatures to the contamination, we are in the presence of all favourable conditions for microorganisms.

to grow and dwell on the foods, causing by its toxins, typical symptoms of various types of food borne intoxications.

However, and according to what was referred in the "costs and implications of food safety flaws" chapter, microorganisms are not the only cause for food borne illness nor are they the only existing hazard.

Chemical substances, physical substances (pieces of glass, metal and bones, etc...) as well as excess substances (salt, fat, etc...) also cause hazards to the consumer.