

# Tips for Eating Local

Don't let food bring you down!



Eat  
SMART,  
Stay  
Ready!



## Make smart local food choices during deployment.

This card contains information about potential health risks from eating local foods. Local foods are those eaten on the economy or from sources not approved by U.S. military preventive medicine and veterinary personnel. They are found off-Forward Operating Base (FOB) and also on-FOB in some locally owned and operated food establishments. Do not assume local foods eaten on-FOB are from approved sources.

## Risk

---

At times, you may need to eat local foods with community leaders and residents. Eating local allows for better understanding and exchange of customs between U.S. forces and local communities. The practice can improve working relationships, trust and morale.

Although eating local may be good for building relationships, it does carry some risk. Those who are not accustomed to local foods may be more likely to get foodborne illnesses. These illnesses may be relatively short in duration (hours or days) or severe, long-term, and even life-threatening. Lost duty days, decreased performance and prolonged illness are possible. In addition, when eating local food, you should be aware that enemy forces could intentionally contaminate or poison food. Maintaining situational awareness is critical.

## Symptoms of Foodborne Illness

---

Common symptoms of foodborne illness include:

- » nausea
- » vomiting
- » diarrhea
- » fever

Seek medical attention if you experience any of these symptoms.

## Local Customs

---

Being invited to dine with locals is generally considered an honor and is a powerful way to build trust. Cultural sensitivity and tact are critical. Refusing food can offend partners. Always seek command guidance before dining.

## Decrease Your Risk

**Educated choices regarding the types of local food you eat can help to reduce your risk of foodborne illness.** The chart below identifies common local foods based on the level of risk they pose for foodborne illness. This information does not replace the guidance or policies put in place by command leadership. Always seek command guidance before eating from unapproved sources.

Lower Risk Foods	Higher Risk Foods
<i>Eat Lower Risk Foods with Caution</i>	<i>Avoid Higher Risk Foods</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Breads </li><li>» Fully cooked vegetables, beans and rice that are kept and served hot</li><li>» Boiled or well done meats (lamb, beef, poultry and fish) that are eaten within 2 hours after cooking</li><li>» Hard-skin fruits and vegetables that you peel yourself (bananas, oranges, limes)</li><li>» Hot tea </li><li>» Bottled water or canned carbonated drinks that you open yourself</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Milk and other dairy products (cheese, ice cream and butter) </li><li>» Partially cooked or raw meats or fish</li><li>» Raw, leafy vegetables </li><li>» Leftovers, take-home, or doggie bags</li><li>» Opened/unsealed beverage containers</li><li>» Ice, iced drinks, frozen desserts and juices</li><li>» Locally canned or packaged products</li></ul>