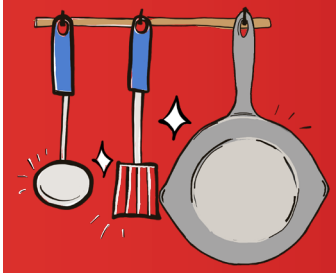
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

6 MEASURES TO KEEP FOOD SAFE in a WILDFIRE

AVOID CONTAMINATION

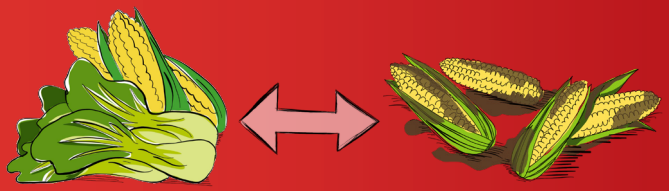
Why is it important? Apart from the immediate danger wildfires pose to food (by burning, charring, or heat stress), fires also release toxic fumes and soot from burning substances. This can not only contaminate food, but even permeate food packaging. Chemicals used to fight fires may also be toxic and make food items or kitchen utensils unsafe if they are exposed to them.

Do not consume crops that show visible residue from fire retardants.



Wash cookware and utensils exposed to soot or ash with detergent. Rinse, then sanitize and air dry.

Assess your food products and physically separate salvageable items from contaminated foods.



If in doubt, discard any foods that may have been exposed to unsafe temperatures, smoke, ash, soot, or fire retardants.

DID YOU KNOW?

After a wildfire, certain packaged foods (e.g. undamaged cans, containers, jars with unbroken seals, foods in sealed bags) can be salvaged and used. Check for damage or spoilage, and verify that the date mark hasn't passed. Clean the outside of the package before opening it. Bear in mind that some contamination may be invisible, such as unclean water used to fight the wildfire.