

Food crime is an international problem

6th September, 2014



There is a new and growing danger with the food we eat. Criminal gangs are selling billions of dollars of fake food to supermarkets around the world. The food could be very dangerous.

In the past few years, there have been some high-profile scandals. In Britain, tons of horse meat ended up in products that were labeled as beef. British police recently found a product that used cheaper peanut powder instead of almond flour. This could seriously harm or kill people with peanut allergies. In 2008, six babies died in China after gangs made and sold fake milk powder. Gangs can make a lot of money from fake food. It is also safer than selling drugs for the gangs because the penalties are lower.

The assistant director of Interpol, Michael Ellis, told the BBC that food crime is very similar to the drugs trade. He said: "In my experience, the patterns used by criminals involved in counterfeiting are very similar to those used in the dealing of drugs." He said police in 33 countries show that food crime is a serious international problem. The police found children's candies that were dyed with a poisonous chemical, 430,000 litres of fake drinks and 22 tons of long-grain rice that was labeled as high-quality basmati rice. The British government said it was a difficult problem to tackle. It said that using technology might be the only way to beat the criminal gangs.

Sources: BBC / The Guardian

Writing

Which is worse, food crime or drug crime? Why? How can we stop them?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

danger / criminal gangs / the past few years / high profile / scandals / allergies / fake / crime / similar / patterns / poisonous chemical / rice / a difficult problem / technology

True / False

- Food crime is worth billions of dollars. T / F
- In Britain, criminals sold horse meat but said it was beef. T / F
- Police found that criminals replaced peanut powder with almond flour. T / F
- There are currently no penalties for faking food. T / F
- Interpol said food crime and the drugs trade were similar. T / F
- Police in 33 countries reported food crime to be a problem. T / F
- Criminals tried to sell basmati rice as long-grain rice. T / F
- The British government said technology would not beat the gangs. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. fake | a. terrible |
| 2. ended up | b. punishment |
| 3. instead of | c. imitation |
| 4. harm | d. sweets |
| 5. penalty | e. rather than |
| 6. similar | f. defeat |
| 7. serious | g. finished |
| 8. candies | h. alike |
| 9. tackle | i. injury |
| 10. beat | j. stop |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think food crime is?
- What do you worry about when you buy food?
- How can we eat food that we know is safe?
- What food in supermarkets is not so good for us?
- What would you do if the food you bought wasn't real?
- Do you have any allergies?
- How much do you trust the food safety system in your country?
- What should the penalties be for food crime?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

1. There is a new and growing
 2. gangs are selling billions of
 3. products that were labeled
 4. people with peanut
 5. the penalties
 6. food crime is very similar to
 7. criminals involved
 8. candies that were dyed with a
 9. labeled as high-
 10. the only way to beat
- a. allergies
 - b. as beef
 - c. are lower
 - d. quality basmati rice
 - e. danger
 - f. poisonous chemical
 - g. the criminal gangs
 - h. dollars of fake food
 - i. the drugs trade
 - j. in counterfeiting

Discussion – Student B

- a) What food crimes do you know about?
- b) How is the drugs trade similar to food crime?
- c) How can the police stop the criminals?
- d) What would you do if you ate fake food and became very ill?
- e) What can supermarkets do to make sure our food is safe?
- f) How can we use technology to fight food crime?
- g) Have you ever eaten something that made you ill?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a criminal?

Spelling

1. acmnrili gangs
2. there have been some high-feriopl scandals
3. tons of horse meat ended up in pcrdtuos
4. peanut powder instead of almond lrfou
5. kill people with peanut elarlgeis
6. the anlesipte are lower.
7. The ssaitntsa director of Interpol
8. food crime is very irmlias to the drugs trade
9. a esouisr international problem
10. dyed with a unooispos chemical
11. high-yaliuqt basmati rice
12. a difficult problem to leactk

Answers – Synonym Match

| | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. c | 2. g | 3. e | 4. i | 5. b |
| 6. h | 7. a | 8. d | 9. j | 10. f |

Role Play

Role A – The drugs trade

You think the drugs trade is the biggest danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them how their dangers can be reduced. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): terrorism, food crime or global warming.

Role B – Terrorism

You think terrorism is the biggest danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them how their dangers can be reduced. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): the drugs trade, food crime or global warming.

Role C – Food crime

You think food crime is the biggest danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them how their dangers can be reduced. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): terrorism, the drugs trade or global warming.

Role D – Global warming

You think global warming is the biggest danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them how their dangers can be reduced. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): terrorism, food crime or the drugs trade.

Speaking – Dangers

Rank these with your partner. Put the most dangerous at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- the drugs trade
- guns
- global warming
- terrorism
- viruses like Ebola
- food crime
- roads and traffic
- natural disasters

Answers – True False

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | T | b | T | c | F | d | F | e | T | f | T | g | F | h | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.