

Understanding Food Safety and Consumers' Rights Workshop

December 19, 2009

CEDAC, in collaboration with the Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP), organized a workshop on **Food Safety and Consumers' Rights** at CEDAC's office in Phnom Penh. The workshop was supported by Oxfam America. Thirty-one people (12 women) including farmers, consumers, students, journalists and CEDAC staff members attended this workshop.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Increase the consumer's awareness of food safety and personal and family health
- Identify solutions and strategies in choosing qualified and safe foods
- Share the experiences of forming the Consumers' Association of Penang, Malaysia

During the workshop, many interesting topics were presented to the consumers. There were presentations on the impacts of unsafe food (food produced with pesticides) to people's health and the environment; the understanding of food and pesticides; and the experiences of CAP and Consumers' Rights. The participants also worked in groups for discussions and asked questions. Mr. Keam Makarady, director of CEDAC's Health and Environment Program, said that a greater understanding of food safety is needed among our Cambodian people as a whole. "Whilst the food production industry is rapidly growing in the country, the understanding of food safety among our people is limited and they seem not care about it due to their poverty," Mr. Makarady said. "To keep their products longer, the producers often use chemical substances and color substances to add into those products that strongly affect consumer's health," he added.

As a result of the workshop, many good ideas and recommendations were proposed for better solutions. Journalist representatives from newspapers, magazines, radio, and television filed stories to report for their broadcasting companies, helping to spread the knowledge about food safety to more and more people.

