

Making a Difference

Food Protection Management In-depth Summary

District 3 Family and Consumer Sciences

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Relevance

Each year, **nearly 1 in 6 people** become ill from the food they eat. Symptoms of foodborne disease include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, fever, and headache. While some people may view this as a mere case of “food poisoning” foodborne illness has serious health and economic consequences. In fact, foodborne illnesses from five pathogens alone (Campylobacter, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, E. coli O157:H7, and E. coli non-O157:H7 STEC) cost more than \$6.9 billion in medical expenses, lost productivity, and even death. All of us are at risk for foodborne illness, but older adults, pregnant women, young children, individuals with chronic disease, and those with a compromised immune system are at an increased risk. Since half of our food dollars are spent on foods eaten away from home, it is imperative that employees who work in retail food service handle food safely.

Response

To meet the need for quality food safety education in Texas retail food establishments, the County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences in District 3, met together to plan and implement the Food Protection Management program (FPM) program. The program that consists of several components was developed by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension specialists and agents. Throughout District 3 agents have worked in teams and as individuals to present lessons for each of the tree components.

1. The first component is the Certified Food Manager (CFM) program. Using the curriculum, *Food Safety: It's Our Business*, this program is conducted at the county level with usually one or two counties hosting the training together. The class is a two day and/or one day format. The program's educational lessons and activities focus on the following areas:
 - Enhanced use of temperature control measures in food service such as thermometer use, time and temperature control, safe internal cooking and holding, thawing and general storage temperatures.
 - Increased adoption of proper hygiene and handwashing practices of food serve employees and managers.

- Increased adoption of practices to avoid cross-contamination including proper storage, washing and sanitizing of utensils and equipment.
2. The second component of the FPM program is the accredited food handler course, Food Safety: It's in Your Hands. This two-hour course is offered in the counties and is targeting front line food service workers. It focuses on time and temperature abuse, personal hygiene and cross contamination.
 3. The third component of the FPM program is the Cottage Food Course. This course was created to help residents who prepare and sell specific foods from their unlicensed residential kitchen to do so properly and safely. The course included the accredited Food Handlers for Cottage Food Businesses. The course is required for the owner of a Cottage Food business. The course covers the basics in food safety practices and meets the requirement of the state of Texas.

Results

During 2015, six CFM Classes were held. 60 people in District 3 participated in the FPM program and completed the certified food manager program and exam.

Certified Food Manager Participant characteristics (n=26)

Female	80%
Caucasian	61%
High School Degree	38%
Some College/College Degree	62%
More than 16 years of food service experience	34%
No food safety training within previous 12 months	81%
Previously completed a Certified Food Managers Course	46%
First exposure to AgriLife Extension	57%

Pass rate for Certified Food Manager Exam was 82%.

Food Handlers Food Safety and the Cottage Food Safety Course


During 2015, **217** people in **District 3** completed the food handler program. This included participants in the Cottage Food Courses that was held along with the food handlers' class. A pre/post survey was used to evaluate the food handlers training program. The results showed an increase of knowledge as score averages increased from 72 to 89.

Acknowledgements

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VALUE

Food Safety Education



Both those who work in food-service establishments and those who simply cook in their own kitchens benefit from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's food-safety education programs. The resulting improvement in safe food handling benefits consumers by helping prevent food-borne illnesses and the public health care costs they cause.

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