Development of an Integrated Multi-Level Food Safety Training Program for Spanish-Speaking Food Service Workers

Glencye Peterson-Vangness, Extension Educator

College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences
University of Minnesota

TEAM MEMBERS

Principal Investigator:
Francisco Diaz-Gonzalez, Professor, Department of Food Science and Nutrition, St. Paul, MN

Co-Principal Investigators:
Glencye Peterson-Vangness, Extension Professor, University of Minnesota Extension, Mankato, MN
Kendra Kauppi, Research Associate, Dept. of Food Science and Nutrition, St. Paul, MN
Thomas Barthelmeis, Evaluation Specialist, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences, St. Paul, MN

Collaborator:
Claudia Boo de Diaz, Certified ServSafe® Instructor, Dept. of Food Science and Nutrition, St. Paul, MN

Additional Staff:
Briana Baiker (not pictured)
Amy Mayer (not pictured)

PROJECT GOAL

The ultimate goal of this food safety research and Extension program was to enhance food safety best practices (FSBP) by Spanish-speaking food service workers using comprehensive approaches.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Define the unique characteristics and situations of the Spanish-speaking food service worker (FSW) and manager population related to learning and using FSBP.
2. Identify “knowledge/information systems” within food service establishments that inhibit and support the adoption and utilization of FSBP by Hispanic FSW.
3. Develop and implement effective training for Spanish-speaking FSW and managers.
4. Develop and implement education methods that deliver effective food safety education to Spanish-speaking FSW.
5. Develop and implement effective onsite educational approaches for restaurants employing Spanish-speaking FSW and managers.
6. Evaluate the proposed training activities and determine their effectiveness at generating FSBP learning/skill gains, behavior change, and the adoption of best practices and related organizational systems by food service establishments.

BACKGROUND

- 40% of outbreaks have been attributed to commercial food service establishments (Olson et al., 2000).
- Within the next decade the food service industry will employ 14.8 million people.
- 95% of the food service establishments are owned by Hispanics (NRA 2009). 17% of undocumented workers work in the food service industry from an estimated population of 5.3 million (Lowell and Fry, 2002).
- In Minneapolis, 55% of the food service workers speak predominantly Spanish.
- The Hispanic population reached 4% of the entire population (Census Bureau 2010).

ISSUES ADDRESSED

- Food safety training has not properly met the needs of the growing Hispanic population because of a lack of language specific and culturally appropriate training.
- Passing rate of traditional 1-day Certified Food Manager (CFM) courses in Spanish was 60% in MN.
- Less than 10% of the Spanish-speaking restaurant workers had formal food safety training.
- No information on long term behavior changes as a result of a food safety training exist.

PROJECT TERM

September 2009 to August 2014

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PLAN

EXTENSION APPROACHES

A. Direct Contact Instruction

- ServSafe® Spanish Series
  - Format of four 2.5-hour sessions given once a week for CFM’s
  - Includes hands-on activities, take-home assignments, and practice tests before and after the class
  - Final test given at the fourth session

- ServSafe® Spanish Renewal
  - Required 4-hour food safety training every 3 years for MN CFM’s
  - Spanish CFM renewal training approved by MHD and MDA

- Food Safety Employee Training (FSET) Spanish
  - Classes offered on-site at a food establishment
  - Includes 2 hours of hands-on training in a FSBP
  - Classes developed for educational food safety needs of employees

B. Self Audit Program

- Food Service Protection System sponsored by the Twin Cities Advance Practice Center (APC) and the City of Minneapolis.
- Encourage restaurants to inspect their operation based on a risk assessment checklist.

C. Technology-Based Food Safety Training

- Translate into Spanish, of M Extension English ServSafe®
- CFM renewed online food safety course modules
- Pilot online course as a hybrid: renewal online food safety course modules plus technology training at local community computer center

CONTRIBUTORS

City of Minneapolis Health Department—Curt Fernandez, Manager; Tim Kantrowitz, District Supervisor
City of St. Paul Health Department—David Weisberg, Sanitarian
City of Minneapolis—Tim Jenkins, District Supervisor; Anna Stolte, Food Service Manager
City of St. Paul—David Weisberg, Sanitarian and Kelcy Kassich, Environmental Health Manager
MDH Mankato District Office—Yuri Koller, Food Protection Specialist
3M Mankato District Office—Tami Gerdes, Dairy & Food Inspection Division
University of Minnesota Extension—Kristen Mastel
City of Mankato Health and Environmental Safety
University of Minnesota Extension—Glenyce Peterson-Vangness, Regional Director
University of Minnesota Extension—Amy Roetel, Ph.D.

BARRIERS

- Low attendance rates and frequent cancellations
- Elementary school predominant level of education
- Barriers: study not being done; low or failing test scores
- Plus/minus cost of food safety training
- No information on long term behavior changes as a result of a food safety training exist.

REFERENCES

Wash your hands with soap +0.31* Use a thermometer +0.65* Use tongs or deli tissue +0.87* Use a test strip +0.98* Wash, rinse, or sanitize food contact surfaces +0.98* AVERAGE +0.58* * statistically significant

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