

2019 Report

ServSafe® Food Safety Education Program

A partnership with Kansas Restaurant and Hospitality Association (KRHA)



The Situation Food safety is an important public health priority. Foodborne illness is a common, costly—yet preventable—public health problem. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that roughly one in six people in the U.S. (about 48 million) get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die of foodborne illness each year. Most cases of foodborne illness can be prevented through proper hygiene practices, including hand washing and following proper food handling and preparation recommendations.

What We Did K-State Research and Extension (KSRE) Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) professionals in partnership with the Kansas Restaurant and Hospitality Association (KRHA) provided food safety training to foodservice outlets, schools and community organizations. The ServSafe® Food Safety Education program is a nationally recognized certification and training program. This program targets foodservice managers, entry-level food handlers, and community organizations who provide food to the public. In 2019 our efforts resulted in over 340 contact hours of food safety education. FCS extension agents and KRHA educators help deliver a wide variety of consumer, food handler and foodservice manager food safety education trainings. Whether instructing a restaurant owner, line cook, culinary arts student or church dinner volunteer, educators provide training and tools focusing on risk factors known to be the most important when it comes to preventing foodborne illness.

Outcomes In 2019, ServSafe® Food Safety Manager Classes reached 542 foodservice workers statewide. These 32 classes resulted in 429 foodservice employees receiving ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification. Also in 2019, 25 ServSafe® Food Handler classes were held with 614 participants completing the class. Post-session surveys of 304 participants indicated that they had increased knowledge and skills of best food safety practices. Of the participants completing the post survey, 88% indicated they plan to use what they learned at work and/or at home. Participants reported they intend to wash their hands, check food temperatures and use food thermometers more often, and to be more cautious of cross contamination and food left out at room temperature.

Public Value The value of food safety education and training programs is that Kansans are provided a safer dining environment, as well as the potential for fewer hospitalizations, reduced medical costs, and fewer days of work missed due to illness.

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