



Program Focus Team Action Plan: Kansas Consumer Food Safety Education Program

2013-2014

Strategic Opportunities Addressed:

- Ensure an Abundant and Safe Food Supply for All

Situation:

Public awareness of food safety has been increasing due to recent nationwide outbreaks. The 2013 K-State Research and Extension Prioritization Survey ranked: "Handle, store, and preserve food safely," as a high priority. In the 2007-2008, K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Science Program Survey of 2,065 Kansas citizens, 83.4% indicated that handling food safely at home was important, and 76% identified preserving food safely at home as important. In this same survey, 74.1% of the respondents stated that keeping food safe when eating out (in restaurants) was important. In the 2009 K-State Research and Extension Strategic Opportunities Survey of 564 county Program Development Committee members, 86% of respondents indicated that enhancing the safety of the food supply was important or somewhat important.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011) estimate that in the U.S. roughly one in six Americans (or 48 million people) get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die of foodborne illness each year. The most severe cases tend to occur in the very old, the very young, those who are immune-compromised, and in healthy people exposed to a very high dose of an organism. There are 31 known foodborne pathogens, while many others that cause foodborne illness remain unidentified. Most cases of foodborne illness can be prevented through proper hygiene practices, including hand washing and following proper food handling and preparation recommendations, from farm to plate.

Expenditures for meals eaten away from home account for a major share of food spending. The increase in dollars being spent on foods prepared outside of the home increases the need for food safety education programs targeting foodservice operations (including restaurants, schools, hospitals, care homes, childcare centers and grocery stores).

Nationally and in Kansas, increased interest in locally-grown foods and preserving foods at home requires additional food safety education that is relevant to these practices. The USDA reports 7864 Farmers Markets across the US in 2012; an increase of 40% from 2006. According to the National Gardening Association Garden Market Research report, seven million households planned to grow their own fruits, vegetables, or herbs in 2009, an increase of 19 percent over the previous year, and a trend expected to rise in the future. An Opinion Research survey released in June 2011 by Jarden Home Brands found that an overwhelming majority of consumers (93%) believe home-made food is healthier, and 88% agree that preserved foods made at home taste better. The survey also found that many adults – nearly half (48%) of those surveyed – are canning or are interested in learning how to can. The fastest-growing population of new home-canners are ages 40 years and younger and live in suburban areas.

Those who preserve food at home often get the foods from their own gardens or at local farmers markets.

Food safety education programs are necessary to help consumers, especially high-risk groups, and foodservice personnel become more aware of foodborne illness risks, to reduce risky food consumption and preparation behaviors, and to develop safe food handling practices.

Public Value:

When you support the K-State Research and Extension Kansas Consumer Food Safety Education Program, participants will help ensure an abundant and safe food supply for all through safe food preparation and home food preservation practices, which will lead to reduced incidence of foodborne illness in the home and in food service/long term care/child care facilities, and an improved quality of life. This will benefit community members by having a safe food supply at home and away-from-home, as well as reducing public cost of health care and health insurance and increasing the number of

productive contributing citizens.

Outcomes:

Short-Term:

- Program participants improve their attitudes toward, and awareness of, issues related to food safety.
- Participating Extension agents, Master Food Volunteers, foodservice professionals and foodservice volunteers increase their knowledge and skills of safe food handling from production to consumption.
- Public program participants increase their knowledge of and skills in safe food handling practices and home food preservation techniques.

Evaluation Questions:

- What awareness, knowledge, skills or change in attitudes did program participants gain regarding food safety?
- What awareness, knowledge, skills or change in attitudes did program participants gain regarding home food preservation?

Medium-Term:

- Participating Extension agents, Master Food Volunteers, foodservice professionals and foodservice volunteers demonstrate increased safe food handling practices from production to consumption.
- More venues serving food in Kansas have food-safety trained employees or volunteers.
- Program participants demonstrate increased use of safe food handling practices and home food preservation techniques.

Evaluation Questions:

- Three to six months after a program, what changes do program participants report regarding safe food handling practices from production to consumption and in home food preservation?
- How many and what types of organizations and foodservice professionals or volunteers have completed food safety programs, the "food safety employee" level of a food safety course, and successfully completed the ServSafe exam?

Long-Term:

- Fewer Kansans experience foodborne illness.
- Foodborne illnesses reported by the Kansas Department of Agriculture and KDHE Office of Epidemiology decrease.
- Kansas Department of Agriculture foodservice code violations in various kinds of food service operations decrease.
- Fewer incidences of foodborne illness from home food handling and preservation are reported.

Evaluation Questions:

- Have foodborne illnesses reported by the Kansas Department of Agriculture and KDHE Office of Epidemiology decreased?
- Have Kansas Department of Agriculture foodservice code violations in various kinds of food service operations decreased?
- Has the reported incidence of foodborne illness from home food handling and preservation decreased?

Outputs:

Participants:

- Extension agents
- Master Food/Gardener volunteers
- Foodservice professionals
- Foodservice volunteers
- General public: school-aged youth, adults living in Kansas
- Farmer's Market Organizations and Vendors

Activities:

- Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Program Focus Team and other Extension Agent Updates
- Master Food/Master Gardener Volunteer Program Trainings
- Jr. Master Gardener Program Resources/Trainings
- ServSafe Certification Workshops
- ServSafe Starters Workshops
- School foodservice Trainings
- In-services for food service professionals outside of Extension
- Workshops for food service volunteers
- Train-the-Trainer Workshops

- Food Safety education presentations/classes for consumers
- Food Preservation Workshops for consumers
- Food Safety & ServSafe Websites
- Fight Bac Goes to Child Care Resources-www.fightbac.org/campaigns/fight-bac-goes-to-childcare
- "Keeping Kids Safe"- food safety for childcare providers
- "Science and our Food Supply"- Food Safety for Middle School Science Classrooms
- "Food, Flies, and Fungus"- 4-H Food Safety Curriculum for Grades 5-8
- Announcements and news releases/TV/PSA/Web announcements
- FNP/EFNEP Resources
- "You Asked It" Newsletter/Other Newsletters
- Surveys
- Updates for current food safety training resources
- Webinars
- Conference calls
- State and organization advisory committees
- Partner with Kansas Restaurant and Hospitality Association (KRHA), Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services, Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and local health departments to identify and implement statewide food safety education needs
- Implement targeted training and educational opportunities using materials and resources from: USDA Fight Bac; KS Department of Agriculture "Focus on Food Safety"; Other state extension resources; "So Easy to Preserve" materials; and National Center for Home Food Preservation - <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/>
- Locating targeted groups and individuals and providing food safety information/education. These groups/individuals may include: for-profit and non-profit foodservice operators/owners/employees, schools, daycare homes/center providers, nursing homes, hospitals, county fair food vendors, families, parent groups and clubs, students, 4-H youth, other consumers.

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