

2010-11 PFT Successes

Title: Serving Food Safely- ServSafe and Home Food Preservation

PFT: Nutrition, Food Safety and Health

The Situation

A K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Science Program Survey of 2,065 Kansas citizens showed:

- 83.4% indicated that handling food safely at home was important.
- 76% identified preserving food safely at home as important.
- 74.1% of the respondents stated that keeping food safe when eating out (in restaurants) was important.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011 estimates 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.

Nationally and in Kansas, the resurgence in home food preservation continues, as consumers increasingly emphasize a healthy, sustainable lifestyle and one that puts them in control over what they eat. The increased interest in locally-grown foods and preserving foods at home requires additional food safety education.

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. 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:

The public 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 cost, fewer days of work missed due to illness, and increased productivity.



ServSafe Food Safety Education Program

What We Did

K-State Research and Extension (KSRE) Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) professionals collaborated with the Kansas Restaurant and Hospitality Association (KRHA) to provide food safety training to foodservice outlets and community organizations in Kansas.

The ServSafe Food Safety Education program is a nationally recognized certification program. This training program targets foodservice managers, entry-level employees, community organizations and groups who provide food to the public. In 2011, our efforts resulted in over 240 contact hours of food safety education.

FCS extension agents deliver a wide variety of consumer, food handler and food service manager food safety education programs. Whether instructing a restaurant owner, line cook or church dinner volunteer, FCS provides training and tools focusing on risk factors known to be the most important when it comes to preventing foodborne illness.

Outcomes

Food safety education is widely believed to be essential to the prevention of foodborne illness in the U.S. It is difficult to place an economic value on educational efforts simply because the purpose is prevention and it is nearly impossible to estimate how many cases of illness were prevented through educational efforts.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, Gary M. Pierzynski, Interim Director.

In 2011, ServSafe Manager Classes reached over 296 foodservice workers statewide. These classes resulted in 269 foodservice employees receiving Food Safety Certification.

In 2011, 764 participants completed the ServSafe Starter Food Handler class.

Participants indicated that they had increased knowledge and skills of best food safety practices. Over 90% of the participants 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.

Success Story

- Approximately 255 Dodge City High School students participated in the ServSafe Starter Food Handler training. Students learned food safety best practices and gained skills in preparing food safely. Several students used their participation certificate when applying for a food service job and/or to ask for a raise at a current job.
- *I'll use it each and every day at both work and home. I have two small children so this information is very valuable to me.*
Montgomery County

Contacts:

Name: M. Gayle Price, M.S., RD, LD
Title: Professor and Extension Specialist
Address: K-State Research and Extension, SE
Phone: 620-431-1530
E-mail: gprice@ksu.edu

Name: Karen Blakeslee
Title: Extension Associate
Address: K-State Research and Extension
221 Call Hall, Manhattan, KS
Phone: 785-532-1673
Email: kblakesl@ksu.edu

Home Food Preservation

What We Did

Family and Consumer Sciences Agents across the state provided home food preservation resources, education and hands-on workshops to the people of Kansas. Although there are many time-tried recipes for home preserved foods, the FCS program employs evidence-based, tested strategies and trains home food preservers in these methods to help assure that preserved food is safe to eat.

In 2011, FCS agents in 21 counties and districts in Kansas offered education and/or hands-on workshops for food preservation. A variety of topics were taught including pressure canning, water bath canning, freezing and dehydrating.

Other FCS classes included pressure canning vegetables; water bath canning pickles, salsa and tomatoes; and information on the science behind preservation, how altitude changes processing, and more. Extension agents in several locations provide pressure gauge testing to ensure that dial gauges for canners are accurate, since this is essential to support safe and proper food processing.

Outcomes

In 2011, 511 adults and 19 youth benefited from these educational efforts. Participants reported an increase in skills, knowledge and confidence in preserving food at home. This also helps assure consumers that their food is preserved properly and is safe to eat.

Success Story

The Can It Forward Basic Home Canning Course encouraged me to try some new ideas and recipes in canning fruits and vegetables. I was also taught some new and updated techniques for preserving food safely. With the Can it Forward idea, I have helped my neighbor learn how to safely preserve food using techniques I learned in the class.

Finney County

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, Gary M. Pierzynski, Interim Director.