

Making a Difference

2018 Lubbock County Food Protection Management

Helping People Be Healthier & Safer

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Relevance: Food Protection Management/Food Handlers/Food Safety - Each year, an estimated 1 in 6 people become ill from the food they eat. Common 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 0157:H7 and E. coli non157: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. Because nearly 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. On September 1, 2016, a new Texas law took effect requiring all food service employees to have the 2-hr food handler’s certification. This included many day care teachers, and non-profit church volunteers, and senior center cooks depending on the regulatory authority rules in each jurisdiction. DSHS inspectors do not require some to have the certification but the City of Lubbock Sanitarians does require it. Many people are also returning to growing their own produce and preserving it. There is some renewed interest in food preservation and food safety knowledge of safe canning equipment is a need as many are selling produce, canned, & baked goods at local farmer’s markets. The Cottage Food Law passed a few years ago requires these people selling at farmer’s markets to have the food handler’s certification.

Response: Food Protection Management/Food Handler’s/Food Safety – To meet the need for quality food safety education in Texas retail food establishment, the Food Protection Management (FPM) program was developed. Our two- or three-day certified food manager program, which is Prometric, ServSafe & ANSI certified, prepares food service workers to sit for the Prometric or ServSafe Certified Food Manager exam. The class is advertised via media and on the FPM website. Our 2-hour food handler program, which is accredited by the Department of State Health Services, trains front-line workers on the basic principles of food safety. With the recent bill passed by the Texas Legislature, beginning September 1, 2016, all food establishment employees, including some day care teachers, & non-profit church volunteers & senior center workers in Lubbock will have to have the 2 hr. food handler’s certification within 60 days of employment. The 2 hr. food handler’s class was offered to the public, to restaurants, day cares, senior centers, etc. through media and Work Force Solutions. They have contracted with this agent to provide the training to their clients and have assisted in advertising the public classes for day care centers on their mailing lists. Both programs are conducted at the county level by Extension Agents. In addition, the Cottage Food Law allowing entrepreneurs to grow, make & sell produce, canned & baked goods at farmer’s markets, also required them to get the 2 hr. food handler’s certification. Five FPM 2 day classes were scheduled with the Hale County FCS Agent, Deana Sageser in Hale and Lubbock Counties. This agent also presented the 2 hr. food handlers classes for Work Force Solutions, the public and restaurant and day care employees. Classes will be held at Work Force once every quarter in 2019.


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Results: Food Protection Mgt./Food Handler's- Five FPM classes were offered in either Lubbock or Hale Counties with those agents teaching the 2 day class to 24 participants. There was a total pass rate of 67% for the 5 yr. ServSafe CFM certification. 2 online tests were proctored with an average test score of 50% pass rate. Three of the persons failed, re-tested in December. Scores will not be available until January 2019. Eleven of 47.8% had previous food safety training; 54.2% had attended Extension programs in the past, while 45.8% had not; 41.7% had previously participated in a food manager course, but 58.3% were taking the course for the first time; 25% were male and 75% were female; 4.2% were African American, 58.3% Hispanic, 33.3% Caucasian, and 4.2% were of another ethnicity; 25% were age 45-54 and 29.2% were 55 or older; 33.3% were cooks and 29.2% were managers and 12.5% were owners, while 25% held another job title; 41.7% had some college education; 25% had worked in food service 6-10 years, while 29.2% had over 16 years of experience; 45.8% were restaurant employees; 66.7% were required to take the CFM course by their job; 79.2% were completely satisfied with the instructors; 95.8% indicated they would be able to practice the knowledge and skills learned at their current job; 100% will wash their hands correctly; there was a 52.4% increase in those that would use a thermometer to check the doneness of food; 68.2% will not change how they handle food with bare hands; and 88.9% will never come to work sick.

Thirteen attended the five 2-hr Food Handler's classes at Work Force, but only the 10 in the four January – October classes were able to be included in the 2018 results. Classes for the public that included day care, nursing home, restaurant employees, and others such as caterers, had 159 included in the results with an additional 12 that will be added to the 2019 results due to timing for the aggregation of results by the State Office. One hundred and sixty-nine participants received their 2-year food handler's certification. Of these food handler participants, 97.1% were female; 11/2% were African American, 65.9% were Hispanic, 21.2% were Caucasian, and 1.8% were of another ethnicity; 7.1% were age 18-24, 24.9% were age 25-34, 24.9% were age 35-44, 26.6% were age 45-54, and 16.6% were over age 55; 100% preferred English; 29.6% were a high school graduate or had a GED and 69.2% had some college, a college degree or a graduate degree; 50% had worked in food service and half had not; 52.4% had worked in food service 1-3 years; 78.4% had had training in food safety; 98.8% were satisfied or very satisfied with the instructor and 98.8% were satisfied or very satisfied with the program; after the class, 95.3% indicated the correct method for hand washing; 75.3% understood them temperature danger zone; 95.9% knew how cross contamination occurs; 94% knew the acceptable tools for handling ready-to-eat foods; 84% knew when to calibrate a thermometer; 79.4% knew how to maintain personal hygiene; 79.4% knew what illnesses and injuries required immediately reporting it to a supervisor; 92.9% knew how people are required to constitute a foodborne outbreak; and 98.2% knew how food is contaminated.

V A L U E

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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