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No Reservations

No Reservations **is a monthly newsletter published by RQA Inc. for the restaurant industry.**

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Certified Food Protection Managers: Bonus or Necessity?

The primary goal of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) is *preventing* foodborne illness outbreaks as opposed to *responding* to them. While the majority of the FSMA addresses the safety of our nation's food supply, the FDA has called upon the retail food industry to improve the food safety practices employed in foodservice establishments. Because restaurants are associated with a significant number of foodborne illness outbreaks, it is not surprising that the FDA has increased its efforts to encourage the widespread, uniform and complete adoption of the FDA Model Food Code by the regulatory agencies responsible for retail food safety standards and inspections.

For example, in Chapter 2 (Management and Personnel) of the 2009 FDA Food Code, it is recommended that the person in charge be a food protection manager. More specifically, as defined in the 2011 Supplement to the 2009 FDA Food Code, "At least one employee that has supervisory and management responsibility and the authority to direct and control food preparation and service shall be a certified food protection manager who has shown proficiency of required information through passing a test that is part of an accredited program." As such, the certified kitchen manager should be knowledgeable about the relationship between food safety practices and foodborne illnesses and, in turn, be able to exert active managerial control over food safety risk factors.

The FDA's Retail Food Risk Factor Studies suggest that the presence of a certified manager has a positive correlation with more effective control of certain risk factors. Also, data from a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Environmental Health Specialist-Network indicated that the presence of a certified food protection manager reduces an establishment's risk for a foodborne outbreak and is the primary distinguishing factor between outbreak and non-outbreak restaurants.

Fortunately, many state and local agencies currently follow mandatory manager certification requirements. If your jurisdiction does not have such a requirement, consider voluntarily adopting this recommendation as a matter of good practice. Remember, having a Certified Food Protection Manager on staff at all times could be the difference between *preventing* a foodborne illness outbreak and *responding* to one.

Source: Supplement to the 2009 FDA Food Code (2011), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration



Food Safety Training: Don't Stop with Managers

Within the foodservice industry, the Certified Food Protection Manager has proven to be a valuable component of a proactive approach to food safety. However, without a knowledgeable and supportive staff, even the best manager may not be able to protect patrons from an illness caused by improperly handled food. Even an employee with the best intentions may be putting your customers at risk due to a lack of food safety knowledge.

Protecting your customers from a foodborne illness is the ultimate goal of having a well-educated staff. However, here are some other benefits you may not have considered: improve relationships with health inspectors; boost employee morale; prevent bad publicity and lawsuits caused by a foodborne illness; increase customer satisfaction due to your attention to food safety; and, develop a reputation of excellence by making the health of your customers a top priority.

There are many options you can explore to find a certification program that is appropriate for your needs. There are three nationally recognized programs: The National Registry of Food Safety Professionals, Inc. (Certified Food Safety Manager); The National Restaurant Association (ServSafe®); and, Prometric (Prometric Certified Professional Food Manager Program).

Make food safety training a priority - maximize the capabilities of your employees – set the standard of excellence.

Source: ***Texas AgriLife Extension Service***

Asian Restaurant Closed

January 2012

A Bellevue, Washington Asian restaurant was closed on January 12, 2012 by the health department. The restaurant was operating without a valid food business permit, It was also reported that there was an imminent health hazard due to lack of available hot water. As of February 6, 2012 the restaurant remains closed.

By: Seattle and King County Public Health Department

Norovirus Found at Sandwich Shop

January 2012

The Blackford County Health Department got a sandwich chain to close this week after many people complained of flu-like symptoms that even hospitalized some. More than 90 people were affected, according to the local environmental health officer. The confirmation of Norovirus came after testing of stool samples and interviews with people who dined there. Both the Blackford County Board of Health and the Indiana Board of Health participated in the investigation. The local health officer said the contamination was traced to a human, but she could not be more specific until the state offered its report. She re-inspected the restaurant and the restaurant reopened Friday. That was after a week of investigation. This restaurant, like other local food establishments are routinely inspected by the health department, and the local health officer would not say directly how many previous violations this restaurant had. Norovirus is highly contagious and common symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting and stomach pain, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. It can spread quickly by drinking liquid and eating food that is contaminated. Even touching surfaces can spread the virus.

Submitted by Wanton Writer on Fri, 01/13/2012 - 12:18pm.

Mexican-Style Restaurant Salmonella Outbreak

January 2012

CDC collaborated with public health officials in multiple states and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to investigate a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Enteritidis infections which was associated with eating food from a Mexican-style fast food restaurant chain, Restaurant Chain A. Investigative efforts were unable to identify a specific food associated with illness, but data indicate that contamination likely occurred before the product reached Restaurant Chain A locations. This outbreak now appears to be over.

As of January 19, 2012, a total of 68 individuals infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Enteritidis have been reported from 10 states. Among persons for whom information was available, illnesses began on or after October 13, 2011. Ill persons range in age from <1 to 79 years, and the median age was 25 years old. Fifty-four percent of patients were female. Thirty-one percent of patients were hospitalized. No deaths were reported.

By www.cdc.gov

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