

FoodSafety **INSIGHTS**

FOODSERVICE NEWS & RESOURCES

NSF

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OCTOBER 2005

TRAINING **Moves Into High Gear**



FRONTLINE

- Food Safety Notes from All Over
- E. Coli Trending Down

SOLUTIONS

- Equipped for Safety: Foodservice Manufacturers Go High-Tech

INSIDE INFO

- Case Study: Marie Callender's Safety Measures

BEFORE**AFTER**

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A LETTER FROM NSF**Dear Colleague,**

Education is a lifelong process. That's why this issue of FoodSafety INSIGHTS focuses on the critical challenges of ensuring that your workforce is constantly up-to-speed on best practices through comprehensive training and education programs.



In the May issue of FSI, we focused on avoiding legal landmines by talking with the experts. This October's lead article, "Training Moves Into High Gear," builds on our series with experts by helping you identify procedural problems during the workforce training process so that you can implement corrective action long before a minor oversight of a sanitation problem spirals into potential litigation.

While education poses an ongoing challenge for foodservice operators, it creates an excellent opportunity to establish a checkpoint on your internal processes and procedures, improve staff communications and ultimately improve the industry's image as a whole. From the chef in the kitchen to managerial staff to hourly employees, everyone needs to be "on the same page" when it comes to risk management and protecting your bottom line.

At NSF, we have a history of providing quality education and training programs through the NSF Center for Public Health Education (CPHE). Founded in 1999, the CPHE has offered programs on a wide range of public health and environmental subjects, including food safety, water quality and treatment, NSF standards, worker health and safety, and much more. Our commitment to training and education is but one way that NSF helps raise the bar on health and safety. Through the CPHE, our creative efforts with the Scrub Club website for kids (www.scrubclub.org), and the Consumer Affairs Office (www.nsfconsumer.org), we are continually developing public service programs that benefit our key stakeholder groups—industry, the regulatory community and consumers.

Please let us know what you think of this issue and share your thoughts on how FSI can make a difference in your business by providing news-you-can-use for your organization.

—**Kevan P. Lawlor, President and CEO,**
NSF International

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Food safety training and certification are important factors in lowering the incidence of health department compliance citations, and thus the incidence of foodborne illness risk factors

NSF FOOD SAFETY TRAINING SCHEDULE**NSF HealthGuard Food Manager Certification Training**

Providence, RI	October 25
Ann Arbor, MI	November 7
Boulder City, NV	November 15

HACCP Manager Certification Training

Fresno, California	October 25-27
Ann Arbor, Michigan	December 6-7

Plan Review for Food Establishments

Bolingbrook, IL	November 9-10
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HACCP Auditor Training

Ann Arbor, MI	October 18-20
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Dietary Supplements Good Manufacturing Practices

Atlantic City, NJ	October 14
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Bottled Water NSF Certification, HACCP, and GMPs

Ann Arbor, MI	October 12
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NSF/ANSI Standards 2,4,7,51 (Food Service Equipment)

Ann Arbor, MI	October 26
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Publishers: Jeff Berling, Alan Plassche

Editor: Joan Lang

Art & Design: Marla Camp, Impact Productions

NSF Contact: William Fisher, 1-800-NSF-MARK, or fisher@nsf.org

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FRONTLINE

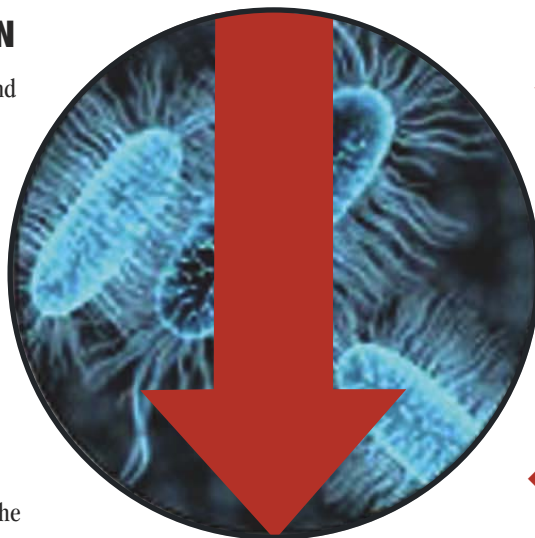
News You Can Use

E. COLI TRENDING DOWN

According to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture, the number of ground beef samples contaminated by the potentially deadly *E. coli* O157:H7 strain has dropped 80% since the year 2000. Most significantly, the agency reported a 43.3 % decrease in the percentage of *E. coli* O157:H7-positive samples collected in 2004 compared with the previous year.

This follows news a year ago from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reporting a 36% reduction in illness from *E. coli* O157:H7 in 2003 versus 2002, the latest year for which data is available. In addition, the number of FSIS recall actions related to O157:H7 have also continued to drop—there were six recalls in 2004, compared with 12 in 2003 and 21 in 2002.

Since 1994, FSIS has taken a number of steps to reduce *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw ground beef, following a highly publicized outbreak the year before, and began a sampling program to test for it in federally inspected establishments and in retail stores. In 2002, the agency ordered all beef plants to reexamine their food safety plans, requiring them to implement measures that would “sufficiently eliminate or reduce” the incidence of the pathogen in their products. As a result, a majority of plants have made major changes to their operations, according to FSIS, including the installation and validation of new technologies specifically designed to combat *E. coli* O157:H7. Many plants have also increased testing in order to verify their food safety systems; in fact,



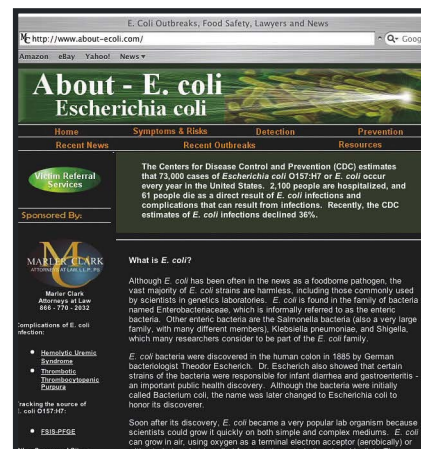
the total number of samples collected in 2004 increased by more than 21%. This combined with a reduction in the number of positive samples suggests the industry is getting more of a handle on this dangerous foodborne pathogen.

Among the technologies and work practices being deployed:

- ◆ **Use of superheated steam or water** to kill surface pathogens on the carcass (including steam pasteurization, steam vacuuming, and hot water sprays)
- ◆ **Using chlorinated water and other sanitizers** (such as trisodium phosphate, or TSP) on carcasses, work surfaces, and equipment
- ◆ **Automated transfer processes**, to minimize cross-contamination through manual contact
- ◆ **Irradiation**
- ◆ **Animal or meat testing** for pathogens

- ◆ **Knife sterilization** and temperature, airflow, and other process controls
- ◆ **Improved evisceration**, and hide and hair removal
- ◆ **Production line layouts** that minimize cross-contamination
- ◆ **Pathogen testing** of equipment and plant environment
- ◆ **Use of labor-saving equipment** that reduces cross-contamination
- ◆ **Increasing rate** at which workers' hands, tools, and equipment are sterilized
- ◆ **Management strategies**, like the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system

The CDC also points out that such techniques as thoroughly cooking ground beef, avoiding unpasteurized milk and dairy products, and frequent handwashing are also useful in reducing the risk of *E. coli* infection.



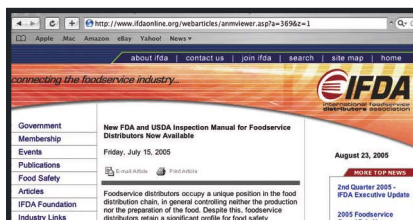
FOOD SAFETY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

The USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) has sent out its new **guidelines on implementing HACCP requirements in K-12 schools**. The new requirements, originally scheduled to take effect July 1, 2005, had been on hold until the FNS could complete the guidelines. The publication, *Guidance for School Food Authorities: Developing a School Food Safety Program based on the Process Approach to HACCP Principles*, provides step-by-step instructions for developing a HACCP-based food safety program, including sample plan and suggested record-keeping forms: www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Downloadable/HACCPGuidance.pdf

Subscribe to the USDA Food Safety and

Inspection Service (FSIS) and get updated **information about product recalls, withdrawals and other food-safety related issues:**

www.govdocs.com/service/subscribe.html?code=USFSIS_64



The new FDA and USDA Inspection Manual for Foodservice Distributors provides a user-friendly tool for the formulation of company policies regarding the actual han-

dling of distribution facilities inspections, and details foodservice distributors' rights and responsibilities before, during and after the inspection:

www.ifdaonline.org/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=369&z=1

USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) has introduced a free **searchable database on food content** for more than 13,000 foods. The new resource is called "What's in the Foods You Eat—Search Tool": www.ars.usda.gov/foodsearch/

The FDA has put sprouts on the top of its list for developing stricter safety standards, including mung, alfalfa, clover, broccoli and radish seedlings, which continue to account

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FRONTLINE

News You Can Use

for outbreaks despite safety guidelines implemented in 1999. Despite being high in fiber and antioxidants and low in fat, **fresh sprouts have been flagged as a health risk** on par with undercooked beef and raw eggs. According to the agency, the establishment of even stricter guidelines is necessary because sprouts are becoming more popular as a component in Asian food as well as sandwiches, salads, and health food items.

Listeria and *salmonella* can continue to live in prepared products even under the most stringent plant safety conditions, according to new research published by the Food Safety Consortium. According to the research, the food processing industry is able to eliminate 99% of the *Listeria monocytogenes* through current sterilization procedures, but a few of the bacteria

are merely injured or starved, and can recover significantly to become a threat. *Salmonella Typhimurium* has a similar ability to survive the treatment normally used to control it. The Food Safety Consortium, which consists of researchers from the University of Arkansas, Iowa State University, and Kansas State University, is now examining what controls are necessary to kill starved or injured pathogens:

www.uark.edu/depts/fsc/



A **new restaurant rating system** in Monterey County, California, called the Gold Seal program, has resulted in some closures—but also many awards. Anyone with fewer than 10 non-critical violations in each mandatory twice-yearly inspection is eligible for a Gold Seal, but one critical score renders the restaurant ineligible—and could result in closure until the problem is fixed.

Dallas has updated its health inspection code to adopt guidelines in Texas Food Establishment Rules, and the Greater Dallas Restaurant Association is sponsoring a **series of training programs** to get the industry prepared for the change, which went into effect August 1. Once these changes have been absorbed, the Dallas City Council may vote to require operators to post letter grades from inspections in the window.

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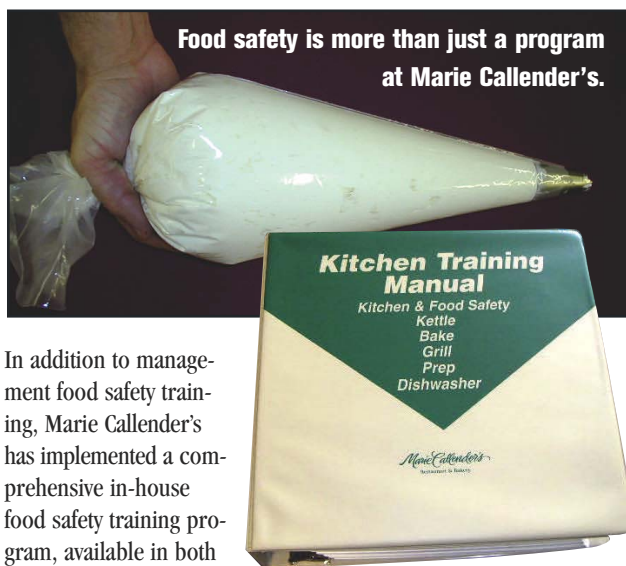
CASE STUDY

Marie Callender's

Food safety is more than just a program or two at Marie Callender's—it's a whole operational philosophy, complete with rigorous procedures that cover everything from basic sanitation to training, certification and even procurement.

"We've been working on this for more than eight years," says Nick Saba, director of food & beverage for the Aliso Viejo, CA-based chain, which operates more than 160 family restaurant/bakery locations in the United States and Mexico. "Because we still do a lot of our production from scratch, we pay a great deal of attention to the food handling flow, and as our menu changes, our processes evolve." Marie Callender's Standard Kitchen Operation Procedures and recipes incorporate HACCP procedures, according to Saba, "from the time the product is received to the time it is served to our guest."

The company maintains a dedicated four-person Quality Assurance field team under the direction of Jim Cottle, director of QA, who is charged with all food safety issues for the restaurants. The staff conducts quarterly Model Kitchen Evaluation inspections, and managers' bonuses are tied to the scores. All restaurant managers are required to be food safety certified, regardless of state requirements.



In addition to management food safety training, Marie Callender's has implemented a comprehensive in-house food safety training program, available in both English and Spanish, that must be passed by all hourly employees and new hires. The program corresponds to functional areas within the restaurant (such as the grill, bakery, kettles, food prep and dishwashers), so that all employees get the knowledge they need to keep food safe—even the dishwashers, as Saba points out. Daily quizzes and a final exam support the learnings, and also indicate areas where employees need to be re-trained. Having certified trainers in each location keeps the process topical and close to home.

About three years ago, the company put a third-party food safety inspection program into place, using actual health department inspectors who work with Cottle on a quarterly basis to inspect all the units. "Jim Cottle keeps track of the scores on an ongoing basis, and if any red flags go up, he works with the district managers and unit management to solve the problem," says Saba. In this way, each location is inspected eight times a year, giving plenty of opportunity to spot and correct any glitches.

On a day-to-day basis, the company uses a detailed Quality Assurance Line Check system. "Before each meal period, the manager on duty is required to check and document hot and cold food temps, personal hygiene of on-duty staff, and freshness of ingredients, dish machines, sanitizer buckets and other key areas," explains Saba.

The company's food safety philosophy also extends to its purveyors. "All manufacturers that sell to Marie Callender's must have a HACCP system in place before supplying products to our restaurants," says Saba. "Purchasing and QA staff routinely visits key food manufacturer and distributor facilities for checks on their QA procedures, cleanliness and food safety practices."

Most recently, the company has been working with its vendors to come up with solutions to common food safety problem areas, such as disposable whipped cream bags that minimize handling of this potentially troublesome item. Says Saba: "The more the industry evolves with an eye toward food safety, the better it will be for all of us."



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FEATURE

Equipped for Safety

FOODSERVICE EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS GO HIGH-TECH TO HELP OPERATORS MEET THE FOOD SAFETY CHALLENGE

By Donna Hood Crecca

Food safety is a primary concern of the operator community, and manufacturers are responding with solutions ranging from temperature control and monitoring systems to antimicrobial surfaces and equipment features that keep food safety at the forefront," says Deirdre Flynn, executive vice president of the North American Association of Foodservice Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM), based in Chicago.

In fact, food safety ranks among the Top Three concerns of foodservice operators surveyed by Technomic in late 2004. The survey, sponsored by Hobart Corp., found that headlines about foodborne illnesses and concerns about lawsuits weigh heavily on the minds of foodservice operators, who are increasingly looking to their industry partners to assist in achieving their food safety goals.

Thanks to advances in technology, more foodservice equipment products are meeting operator needs in several crucial risk areas throughout the kitchen: temperature control, monitoring, documentation and sanitation.

Here are a few of the latest food safety innovations now available in some major foodservice equipment products.

The Verifresh system from Emerson is designed to temperature-check individual refrigerated cases



Inteltra-Traul's microprocessor controller is featured on several Traulsen refrigeration units

KEEPING TABS ON TEMPS

Ensuring that product is stored, cooked and held at proper temperatures is crucial to preventing the growth of the bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Advances in refrigeration include the X STREAM valve technology incorporated into the Prestige Plus line from **Beverage-Air**. Developed by XDX Innovative Refrigeration, the valve system enables temperatures to decrease faster and reduces the defrost cycle. Independent testing documented the spoilage bacteria growth rate to be 65% less than with traditional defrost cycles, and food products with a typical 3.3-day shelf life had a five-day shelf life with the X STREAM feature. The Prestige Plus line includes roll-in, reach-in and reach-through models.

Visible and audible alarms go off when a door is left open, a power loss occurs or temperature rises or falls outside the ideal limits,

thanks to the Inteltra-Traul microprocessor controller featured on **Traulsen R- and A-series** and full-size undercounter units. What's more, the controller maintains the unit's operation based on actual use history.

"The Inteltra-Traul controller tackles the most important issues foodservice operators face with respect to storing product at ideal temperatures to help keep them safe and fresher longer and protect against food loss," says Steve Willoughby, product line manager, Traulsen.

Smart refrigeration equipment is about to get smarter. An RFID-enabled refrigerator called Cyberfridge is now in development by **Electrolux**. When food product carrying an electronic product code (EPC) tag is placed in the storage cavity, radio frequency identification readers capture product identification information, including its expiration date, the time and date it entered the unit, and its location

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FEATURE

Equipped for Safety

on the shelf. When an employee opens the refrigerator and retrieves the item, they are informed if another product item is closer to its expiration date and are directed to select that one instead. In addition, all item entry and retrieval data is shared with management's PC units, as are temperature levels and other key information. As RFID and EPC technologies become more widespread, this refrigerator will

become available in the U.S., according to Electrolux.



When it comes to maintaining cold temperatures, smaller equipment also comes with big food safety features today. The EZ-CREAM dispenser from **Server Products**, for example, gives operators confidence about what can be a weak link in the food safety chain: the self-serve coffee station.



Server's E-Z Cream is designed to deliver cream and other dairy products safely and efficiently

"Thermoelectric technology ensures the unit holds cream indefinitely at a temperature below 41 degrees Fahrenheit. This removes safety concerns for the operator," says Ron Ripple, vice president, sales and marketing for Server.

The unit features one-touch gravity flow dispensing, drawing only 45 watts to maintain proper temperature without the use of ice. A lockable lid prevents tampering. With a two-quart capacity and small footprint, the EZ-CREAM dispenser is designed to deliver cream and other dairy products safely and efficiently.



Improper holding temperatures account for 30% of foodborne illnesses, according to the International Food Safety Council. Among them is LiquiTec, a pan cooling system from **Delfield**. Eutectic fluid permanently sealed in the jacket surrounding the pan serves as a cooling medium; when refrigerant lines cool the fluid, the pans receive consistent and even cooling.

"With this system, you have 100% contact of the cooling medium on all sides of the pan, rather than tiny contact points," explains Mark Cashen, project manager at Delfield. "This delivers consistent and uniform cooling and confidence about safety."

CAPTURE & RECORD

"Automatic data capture for all food safety issues, including refrigeration and cooking equipment, is crucial today," says G.

READY RESOURCES

To find out if equipment is NAFEM Data Protocol compliant, ask the manufacturer or visit www.nafem.org/resources/dataprotocol/index.cfm.

For more information about NSF certification of food equipment, visit www.nsf.org/business.

Peter Healy, president of Creative Concepts in Food Service, a consulting group specializing in food safety based in Gallatin, TN. "New software programs that trigger when something happens out of the norm are also truly innovative."

Wireless technology is making such data capture and transmission that much easier. The Intelli-PDA Handheld Temperature Inventory Solution from **Cooper Atkins** enables operators to gather product temperature data and send it wirelessly or via a batch download to the back office computer. Corrective action is requested when temperatures are outside safety parameters. In addition, food safety documentation forms, such as HACCP food safety checklists, can be converted to electronic forms.



Air and product temperatures in reach-in merchandising cases are monitored and documented with the VeriFresh Food Quality System from **Emerson Climate Technologies**.



The LiquiTec pan cooling system from Delfield surrounds cooling pans with permanently sealed eutectic fluid

The wireless solution is designed to check individual case temperatures. Used in combination with the E2 Facility Management System and Retail ProAct Food Quality module, the system ensures HACCP compliance.

“When case temperatures dip below the recommended set point, VeriFresh senses it and connects to the E2, which sends out an alert to check the equipment,” explains Lauren Doyle, Emerson spokesperson.

As more equipment manufacturers use the NAFEM Data Protocol (NPD), monitoring and documentation of food safety data will undoubtedly become easier, more efficient and more accurate. Published in 2002, the protocol was updated for wireless

technology in 2003. A standard for “smart” equipment, the protocol is a set of communication rules for the sharing of data between equipment and the back office computer. To date, 17 companies and 60 pieces of equipment are NPD compliant.

ADVERTISER INDEX

Page	Company	Web site
2	Wunder Bar	www.wunderbar.com
5	DayMark	www.daymark.biz
6	MicrobeGuard	www.microbeguard.com
7	Electrolux	www.foodservice.electrolux.com
9	Nice-Pak	www.nicepak.com
11	FoodHandler	www.foodhandler.com
13	SneezeGuard Solutions	www.sneeze-guard-solutions.com
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COVER STORY

Training Moves Into High Gear

Recent data from the Food and Drug Administration confirms what many savvy foodservice operators have known for a long time:

Food safety training and certification are important factors in lowering the incidence of health department compliance citations, and thus the incidence of foodborne illness risk factors.

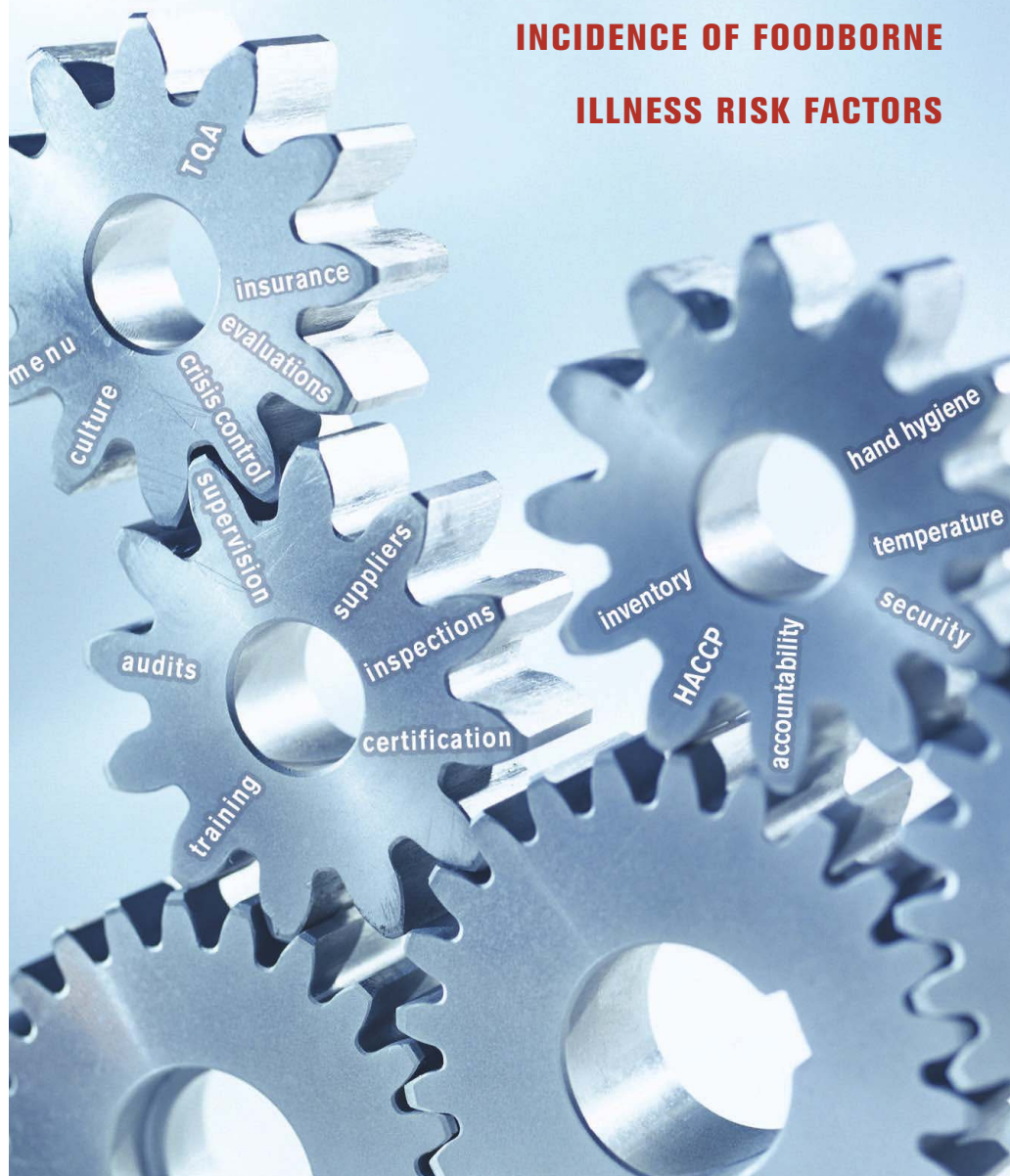


Burger King's Steve Grover didn't need the evidence; as vice president of food safety, quality assurance and regulatory compliance for

Burger King Corp., he's proof that the hamburger giant takes its food safety seriously. "The fact this position exists at the v.p. level speaks to that commitment," says Grover, who joined the company in February, hot off a similar post at the National Restaurant Association. "It says that food safety is every bit as important as operations, marketing, menu development and all the other functional areas of the organization. It has a corporate mandate."

That top-down approach is key to any sophisticated food safety and quality assurance effort—indeed, more and more foodservice organizations are establishing dedicated QA departments that reach not only into food safety training, but also into such areas as purchasing, distribution and supply chain management. "The idea is that you have to address all of these issues in order to serve safe food," says Grover.

**FOOD SAFETY TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION ARE
IMPORTANT FACTORS IN LOWERING THE
INCIDENCE OF FOODBORNE
ILLNESS RISK FACTORS**



COVER STORY

Training

“FOOD SAFETY IS EVERY BIT AS IMPORTANT AS OPERATIONS, MARKETING, MENU DEVELOPMENT... IT HAS A CORPORATE MANDATE.”

Burger King has put its money where its mouth is, certifying more than 15,000 employees in safe food handling procedures in fiscal 2005 alone, and the program is ramping up significantly under Grover's watch. “Our basic policy is that anyone who leads a shift must be trained and certified,” explains Grover. Not just managers, assistant managers and other salaried individuals, but anyone who has the sufficient experience and time-in-grade to be designated a shift leader—many, in fact, are hourly workers. “This goes way, way beyond local health regulations in every market we operate in.”

And that's not all. The 11,000-plus-unit company has also implemented a number of ongoing programs that address everything from time/temperature log



STEVE GROVER

Vice president of food safety, quality assurance and regulatory compliance for Burger King Corp.

procedures to regularly scheduled reviews. The Operations Excellence training program encompasses every aspect of operations training, including food safety, demonstrating how fundamental safety is to the overall picture at Burger King. “It's not two different people talking about speed of service and food safety,” says Grover. “It's all one piece. That helps make food safety an ongoing, everyday part of doing business.”

In fact, the company's priority operations initiatives fall under three general categories: Clean & Safe (food safety and sanitation), Friendly & Fast (service), and Hot & Fresh (food). The Clean and Safe program covers all food handling, sanitation and safety procedures, supported by the appropriate guides, manuals, videos and other resources—in both English and Spanish. Individual modules are arranged by function, such as assembling

Whoppers, so that hourly workers can understand all the wrinkles of their work station, including food safety elements and critical control points. In order to become a shift leader, an employee has to know every single workstation in the house—and indeed, shift leaders are also being groomed to become trainers through teach-and-coach process. “This is not a ‘gotcha’ process,” says Grover. “It's set up to function as peer training.”

The Clean & Safe initiative also mandates regular in-house reviews by a member of the company's field-based QA team, as well as new bi-annual audits by an outside firm. “We have our own inspection procedures, but we needed a mechanism for validating our methods and identifying challenges,” says Grover. “We use the audits to determine whether or not our methods are working, and what additional tools may be needed.”

CulinArt is another foodservice company that has

been putting significant resources behind its food safety training efforts. The Lake Success, NY-based foodservice management company recently created a new director of training and development position and moved six-year HR veteran Matt Santarpia, formerly director of corporate recruitment, into the role. Santarpia works in tandem with



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COVER STORY

Training



MATT SANTARPIA

Director of training and development for CulinArt

“FROM MENU WRITING AND RECIPE TESTING TO EXECUTION, EVERYTHING IS KEYED BACK TO FOOD SAFETY.”

the basics, while managers get what Santarpia calls “the full book.” “By using the same topics, everyone’s speaking the same language,” he explains. Everyone goes through the training—regardless of their prior experience or how long they’ve worked for the company. Once the training is complete, employees are certified by CulinArt, which also includes food safety certification. “All of our managers and chefs have to be certified within a 90-day period of first being hired,” says Santarpia. “This is in addition to what the local health code requires.”

Onsite follow-up is key, in the form of regular meetings, self-inspections, checklists and other tools. “I’d love to have a dedicated trainer in every location, but that’s unrealistic,” he says. “But we can provide unit managers with all the resources they need to provide that role as part of their regular duties.” These resources take the form of complete, packaged kits—

turnkey training aids, as it were—that include manuals, handouts, procedures, and everything else needed for managers to conduct an effective meeting or an inspection dry-run.

Santarpia jokes that he’s called the King of Checklists by his colleagues, but the man has made it his business to write and provide user-friendly checklists on virtually every conceivable procedure, from basic sanitation to checking in an order. “For instance, we have a two-page Safety and Sanitation checklist, broken out by category, which details all of our food safety procedures.”

Copies of the checklists, as well as certification exams, self inspections, training programs and so on are forwarded back to Santarpia at headquarters so that he can identify problem areas. The company has also implemented a middle layer between HQ and units in the field, comprised of 11 geographic districts, each with its own Safety Committee and coordinator. “These people travel throughout their districts, providing training, spot-checking, problem-solving and general support with safety issues,” says Santarpia. “It provides an extra level of safety.

“We have an aggressive safety program, and we have to,” Santarpia adds. “Obviously, we want to offer a safe environment for our employees and customers, but in a business like ours there can’t be any exceptions.”

director of culinary development Roger Beaulieu to devise all of the company’s training platforms.

The move says a lot about the company’s commitment to the human resources aspect of training; it also links Santarpia’s efforts directly to food production—not so surprising given CulinArt’s strategic niche, which

revolves around culinary excellence. “From menu writing and recipe testing to execution, everything is keyed back to food safety,” he explains.

Training had been done on an ad hoc basis; now Santarpia is charged with stepping up the program to prepare the company for growth. The training structure is twofold: hourly learn

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