

Hands-On Food Safety and Regulatory Training for Members of Shared-Use Commercial Kitchens in Florida

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USDA-NIFA, FSOP 2019-70020-30355

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Problem Statement / Issue Definition:

- Food entrepreneurs commonly use shared-use commercial kitchens (e.g., incubators, accelerators) to launch new food-based businesses. Food safety and regulations are common hurdles that these entrepreneurs must face as they grow their businesses.
- Collaborators from UF and FIU created a unique hands-on curriculum that provides a basic overview of state and federal food regulations and outlines food safety plan examples that meet FSMA's Preventive Controls for Human Food Rule standards.
- This project aims to deliver the training to target audiences and assess short- and medium-term knowledge gains and impacts.



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Approach / Methods:

- Curriculum development
- During 2021 and 2022, eleven (11) training events were held using the curriculum for 139 clientele:
 - Seven (7) 1-day workshops intended for food business owners/managers working out of shared-use kitchens
 - Three (3) half-day workshops for employees of these food businesses,
 - one 1-day in-service training targeted towards county Extension Agents within the UF system.
- At the end of each event, participants completed an evaluation form where they reported their knowledge in six topic areas related to food regulations and food safety before and after the training using a five-point Likert scale.
- All results were analyzed using a paired t-test.



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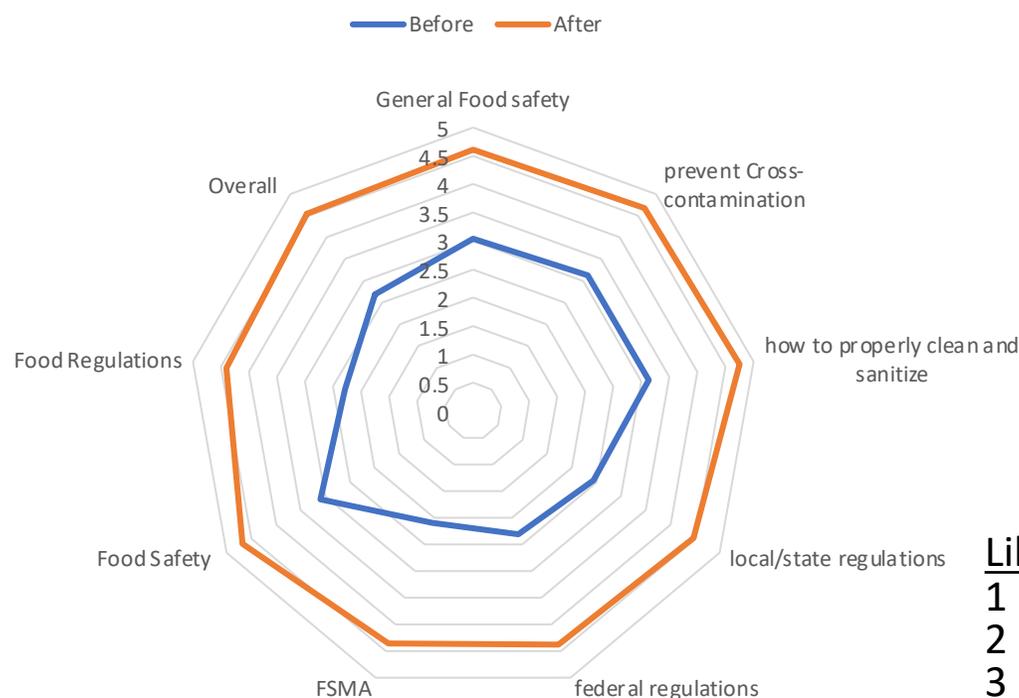
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Results / Outcomes:

- **1-day workshops:** Significant increase ($P < 0.001$) in the perceived knowledge (n = 72) with an overall average of 2.69 pre-training and 4.37 post-training.

Table 1: Percent increase in perceived knowledge assessed through pre-and post-training surveys (n = 72)



Likert Scale Ratings (Knowledge on Topic)

- 1 = None at all
- 2 = A little
- 3 = A moderate amount
- 4 = A lot
- 5 = A great deal

Topic	%increase
General Food Safety	52.7
Cross contamination	57.4
Food contact surface	57.0
Local regulations	74.0
Federal regulations	73.0
FSMA	>100

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- **in-service training** (n = 11) also showed significant increases ($P < 0.001$) in perceived knowledge for their respective audiences.
- **Independent evaluation:** planned in July 2023
- These short-term impacts indicate that entrepreneurs will be better prepared for regulations they may face as their businesses grow.
- The workshops provided a unique opportunity for attendees to learn and practice basic food safety and sanitation techniques, hopefully improving overall food safety practices in these shared environments.

