

7 TIPS

Why All Extension Agents Need to be on Board with Food Safety

UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Reputation and credibility of UF/IFAS Extension

- Food safety matters to us all and we promote research-based food safety information.
- Credible sources of food safety information can be found on our UF/IFAS Extension website and Federal Partner agencies. Not all websites display the most current research (i.e. safe minimum temperature guidelines).
- We do not promote one product brand over another. Use disclaimers to communicate this disassociation.
- Proper food safety practices (i.e. personal hygiene, equipment sanitation) to prevent foodborne illness must be displayed in education presented to clientele.

Qualifications and Training

- Collaborate with a qualified FCS agent in your county and/or district that has ServSafe® /or Safe Staff® credential to promote correct food safety information and practices. They can team up to review the content of creative works that involve food and food safety prior to publishing or posting.
- Consider taking a Safe Staff® course to enhance your own food safety knowledge.

Liability

- Foodborne illness can be costly, and illness outbreaks can ruin our reputation.
- It only takes one error in personal hygiene, one incorrect temperature recommendation to bring about a foodborne illness.
- Engaging in safe food practices saves lives.

Federal, State and Local Laws

- UF/IFAS Extension works in collaboration with federal, state and local governmental agencies. We do the research and governmental agencies set the policy. We have the USDA MyPlate, the FDA Food Codes, FSIS Food Safety Portal, and other organizations (i.e. Partnership for Food Safety) with standards and guidance we follow. We need to display the latest food safety guidelines and research in all creative works.
- Laws and food safety standards were designed to protect the public.

Common Workload Measures

- These metrics from Priority Work Group, Initiative 5, Food and Food Systems are linked to continued Extension knowledge gain, behavior change and funding.

Health and Wellness and Food Systems

- The health and wellbeing of our clientele is a priority. Consumption of nutritious food and food safety affect us all.
- Clientele with compromised immune systems, youth and the older population are at higher risk for foodborne illness and infection and need to eat food that is safe to eat. Food safety needs to be taken into consideration.
- Food safety is a common link and connection to overall Extension Food Systems programming that ties us all together. By following recommended and established *Policy, System and Environmental (PSE's)* factors, of how agent food related videos are created, will enhance the quality of food related videos and other creative works produced by Extension agents in the organization.

Partnership and Teamwork

- Forming partnerships and working as a team as related to food safety, can broaden, and enhance the content of agent tenure and promotion packets This allows for more options for teamwork and multiple authors. Seasoned agents and specialists can help mentor new agents, and the collaboration leads to a higher programmatic productivity (i.e. more publications with multiple authors).
- Teaming up with an FCS agent does not diminish your expertise, but it enhances it, resulting in stronger promotion packets.
- Communication and Consistent Messaging
- Communication and consistent messaging with the latest food safety and quality standards are keys to unified food safety messages in all Extension program areas.
- Consistency is needed in all Extension program areas across the board, as it relates to food safety.
- Food safety and protecting the public matters to us all.

CLEAN



SEPARATE



COOK



CHILL

