Strategies to Reach Television Chefs with Safe Handling Information

Christine M. Bruhn, University of California, Davis
Betty Yaohua Feng, Purdue University
TV cooking shows often do not model safe handling recommendations

• Poor personal hygiene
  – No hand washing
  – licking fingers
  – double dipping

TV cooking shows often do not model safe handling recommendations

- Cross contamination
  - Wiping with reusable cloth
  - failure to separate raw and ready to eat foods

TV cooking shows often do not model safe handling recommendations

• Lack of temperature control for doneness
  – Do not test for doneness with a thermometer
  – Quote end point temperature below that which is recommended

Chefs’ Behavior Influences Consumers

• Up to 60% of those who enjoy cooking shows say they prepare dishes demonstrated at least once a month.
• Half or more say they follow the same practices they see demonstrated.
• Many believe the chef doesn’t always give them all the information they need to prepare the dish safety.

Woods and Bruhn, Food Protection Trends, 2016
How Can Health Educators Encourage Chefs to Model Recommendations?

• Form a coalition of food industry leaders, consumer groups, and government agencies.
• Share findings with chefs/ Food Network and ask them to join a coalition that supports safe food handling.
• Develop draft recommendations and ask chefs’ input as to how these can be followed within the confines of a TV show.
Guidelines Focused on Most common mishandling practices

• Cook - verify thorough cooking with a thermometer
• Chill – appropriate temperature control
• Clean – hand, wash produce wash, do not wash meat
• Separate – avoid cross contamination by use of utensils rather than hands, no double dipping
• Plus - Choose safe food
Putting Strategy into Practice

• Coalition of industry, government, consumer groups very supportive

• Prepared letter to chefs
  – Acknowledged their popularity and influence on consumer
  – Noted that safe handling isn’t always modeled
  – Invited them to join in a new venture to work with the coalition to develop and model safe handling practices
Putting the Strategy into Practice

• Tried to Contact the Food Network
  – Web page states contact the chef

• Contacted chefs
  – via mail, web page messages, and publicist

• Contacted professional chefs and CIA instructors
  – Did not know how to reach the Food Network
Putting Strategy into Practice

Brainstorming:

• Have you worked with celebrity chefs?
• How would you suggest we reach the Food Network or celebrity chefs?
• What actions do you suggest to increase safe handling on TV cooking shows?
Thank you for your suggestions.

Christine Bruhn,

cmbruhn@ucdavis.edu