

Lessons Learned in Adapting a Mandatory HACCP Training Program for Internet Users

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INTRODUCTION

In 1995 the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) enacted its first mandatory science-based Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) regulation which was applied to the seafood industry. Domestic and international seafood processors conducting commerce in the USA must follow regulations which mandate training. The US-based Seafood HACCP Alliance developed a 3-day standardized training curriculum to introduce HACCP principles, seafood hazards (biological, chemical and physical), sanitation control procedures, FDA regulation, conducting a hazard analysis and developing a HACCP plan. In 2001 the HACCP Alliance developed an Internet-based seafood HACCP training course to provide the equivalent of the first two day's training in order to provide an alternative educational program in HACCP education that could be learned at the participant's own pace and convenience.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A national work group consisting of six members who conceptualized and developed the format and structure of the course for twelve training modules. To help provide consensus on the format and structure of the course an alternative training committee was formed.

Implementation of the training method is Internet-based. The Internet was used to conduct a national pilot test and course evaluation prior to launching the on-line course.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Internet HACCP course is in its eighth year. Over 3200 participants have registered. The percentage breakdown includes: Seafood/Food Industry (78%), Government/Regulatory (16%) and Education/Consulting/Services (6%). Internet data shows a trend with the connection speeds and computers used by participants and can provide insight to other trainers who plan to offer distance learning courses to global participants. Food educators contemplating using the Internet as a global access distance learning training method can gain insight from the challenges and successes of this eight-year established training program.