



**THE VOICE OF FOOD RETAIL**

Feeding Families  Enriching Lives

April 2012

FMI Members:

As retailers, there is nothing more important than ensuring the safety of our customers and our employees. Earlier this year, the FMI Board of Directors approved a policy statement on certified food protection managers and food safety training. This policy statement goes above and beyond the requirements in the FDA Food Code and places a new emphasis on having properly trained and certified employees in departments where food preparation is taking place in our stores. By giving employees the tools they need, we are making food safety a priority and helping to ensure the safety of the food we serve and protect our customers.

The attached document is a Best Practice Guide on Food Safety Certification and Training. This document is a supplement to the policy statement and will provide resources and ideas for program implementation. The FMI Food Safety Department can assist with questions and resources.

Food safety starts at the top in every retail company. We need your commitment to implement this policy and provide food safety training and certification programs for your employees that are appropriate for their responsibility and job task.

Kind regards,

Joe Colalillo  
Chairman of the Food Safety Committee, FMI  
President, ShopRite of Hunterdon County, Inc.

Bob Frappier  
Chairman of the Food Protection Committee, FMI  
Vice President, Quality Assurance, Ahold USA

## **Best Practices Guide Food Safety Certification and Training**

### **Food Safety Committee and Board Position**

The food retail industry's strong support of food safety training and education of store management and associates serves as the foundation for the FMI Certified Food Protection Manager Program Board Policy.

The FMI Food Safety Committee and the Board of Directors strongly support FMI having a "best in class" policy statement regarding food safety training. This includes exceeding the requirements of the FDA Food Code and proactively offering training programs for in-store employees that will provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to ensure food safety in stores and enhance their responsibility for food safety practices protecting and benefiting customers.

### ***FMI Board Policy Statement on Certified Food Protection Managers and Food Safety Training***

*Approved January 28, 2012*

*FMI members representing the food retail industry strongly support food safety training and education of store management and associates. A successful food safety program begins with managers who are knowledgeable about food safety hazards and are committed to controlling risk factors within their operation. Associates must receive training in food safety as it relates to their specific duties.*

*FMI supports the following industry activities:*

- Each retail food store should have a person who is a Certified Food Protection Manager in every department where there is a need for food safety controls. A Certified Food Protection Manager is defined as a person who has shown proficiency of required information by passing a test that is part of an accredited Food Protection program.*
  
- Food safety training of associates must be an essential component of a food safety program. Associate training methods must be flexible, effective, and tailored to their specific duties as specified by the operator.*

*Utilization of retail focused training materials, such as FMI's SafeMark Food Safety training program, is recommended as the curriculum is designed*

*specifically for the needs of the supermarket industry. Materials that are industry and/or jobs specific are an essential and effective learning tool for individuals preparing for any nationally accredited food manager certification exam. This includes the SafeMark version of the Certified Food Protection Manager Exam offered by the National Registry for Food Safety Professionals.*

## **FDA**

In the most recent FDA Food Safety Retail Initiatives, FDA stated that they had the goal to “make the presence of certified food protection manager’s common practice”. The current Food Code supplement (September 2011) requires that at least one food establishment employee be a Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM). In addition, data from each of the previous two FDA Retail Risk Factor Studies indicate a correlation between the presence of a certified food protection manager and better food safety practices and behaviors.

## **The Role of the CEO/Owner**

Food safety starts at the top within organizations. Companies committed to food safety have leaders committed to food safety because the CEO/Owner has the capacity to ensure that food safety runs through all organizational activities. A company’s food safety department should be at the organizations’ nerve center, communicating with all other departments. The savvy CEO/Owner works to make the words “food safety” a vibrant part of the entire company’s vocabulary. They know that the safety of consumers and the company’s reputation rests upon an organization-wide investment in food safety excellence.

## **Status of Food Safety Training and Certification in Retail Stores**

A FMI survey conducted in March 2012, asked retail members about their training programs and regulatory requirements for food safety certification. FMI members responding to the survey ranged from one store operations to corporations with more than 250 stores.

- 100% of respondents had an active and ongoing food safety training program
- 90% required that at a minimum, one store manager be a CFPM
- 87% reported that the regulatory agency in their state requires that one manager per store be a CFPM
- The employees in the stores receiving certification included deli manager, produce manager, seafood manager, meat manager, bakery manager, fresh foods manager, store manager, assistant store manager, warehouse manager, supervisors, café manager, and others
- 61% of respondents reported using SafeMark predominately within their organization for food safety training/certification

## **Best Practices in Food Safety Training and Certification**

Many FMI members have examples of training programs that exceed industry standards. Some examples include:

- All associates receive online food safety training, some require passing a test
- Associates receive specific food safety training appropriate for their job tasks
- All store and department managers are required to be CFPMs
- All perishable department managers are required to be certified all parish full team members receive food handler's training all newly hired Associates receive a one hour food safety training program as part of orientation
- All employees involved with food handling are CFPMs
- All employees are trained in food safety from the CEO to the local meat cutter
- “The manager level training has shown a return on investment and improved the food safety program”

## **SafeMark**

In addition to supporting food safety training, the FMI Food Safety Committee and Board of Directors endorse SafeMark as the best training program for retail because it was designed by retailers for retailers. The SafeMark program includes an associate level training program and a CFPM level training program preparing individuals for the certification exam offered by the National Registry of Food Safety Professionals.

FMI can assist with identifying the appropriate training resources for your organization. Contact the FMI Food Safety Department at 202-220-0661 for assistance and resources.
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