



The Center of Excellence for
**FOOD SAFETY RESEARCH IN
CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS**

School Nutrition Program Leaders Define the Ideal HACCP Workshop

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Introduction

- Child Nutrition Programs exist in over 101,000 school districts, providing greater than 10 million children with breakfast and 31 million with lunch daily. Clearly, food safety remains a topic of interest for all stakeholders.
- Congress added food safety requirements in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 in an effort to improve the safety of school meals. Each school was required to implement a food safety program based on hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) principles.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study was to gather insight about the feasibility and usefulness of a HACCP workshop. Precisely, the researchers sought to determine the following:

- The value and outcomes of conducting an in-depth HACCP workshop for school nutrition professionals,
- The topics of greatest need and interest,
- The factors that would incentivize workshop attendance, and
- The factors that would pose barriers to workshop attendance.

Methods

- A convenience sample of graduates of the *Serving Up Science* food safety immersion program were selected for this study.
- Structured questions and discussions were conducted via online video conferences or by telephone.
- Discussion sessions included two to six participants each, guided by a trained research facilitator.
- Session audio recordings were transcribed.
- Key themes were identified and prioritized.

Results

- Fourteen school nutrition professionals participated, representing 11 states.
- The discussions were conducted over a three-week period, with each lasting approximately 1.5 hours in duration.

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Results, Continued

- All participants indicated the need for and interest in an in-depth HACCP workshop.
- The course topics proposed with the greatest frequency included:
 - Monitoring and documentation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
 - Developing SOPs into functional HACCP programs
 - Integration of specific elements of HACCP into diverse operations
- Moderate support was indicated for the integration of computer software and HACCP implementation and/or use.
- Incentives for workshop attendance included:
 - Paid expenses
 - Professional networking
 - Improved food safety acumen
- Barrier to workshop attendance included excessive time away from work.
 - Two to three days indicated as most ideal

Research Applications

- This study provides insight about HACCP implementation and advancement, deemed most relevant by nutrition program leaders.
- Many opportunities exist for stakeholders to collaborate in the development of a HACCP workshop.