

***Food Safety Laws and Regulations Related to  
Home-Based Food Businesses: Perceptions of  
Regulatory Staff, Food Processors, and the  
Home-Based Food Industry in New York State***

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## Background

- Due to the current state of the economy and the perception that home products are safer or more nutritious, interest in preparing foods at home for sale to the public has grown tremendously.
- Most people say they will bake only cakes and cookies.
- Some want to sell to stores; while others want to sell directly to the public in flea and farmers markets.

## Problem Statement

- New York State Food Safety Laws and Regulations do not require training or routine inspections for people processing food from a home kitchen.
- The lack of routine inspections could contribute to potentially contaminated foods being sold to the public.

## Research Question

1. Question: What are the perceptions regarding food safety laws for home based businesses among various stakeholders, specifically: regulatory staff, licensed manufacturers and home processors?

## Methodology

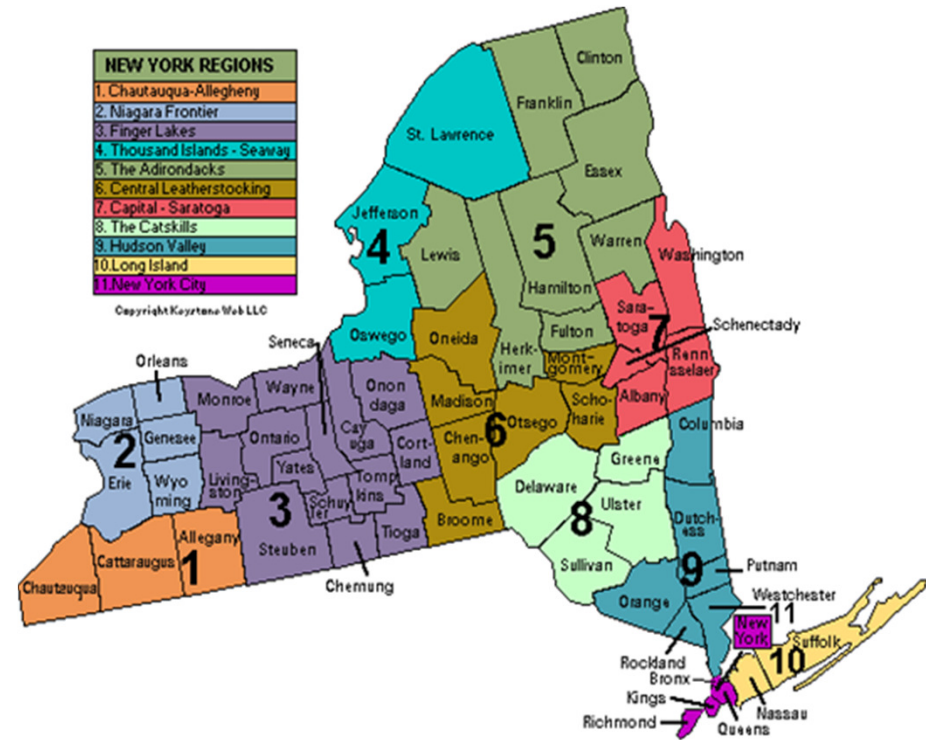
- Developed three survey questionnaires.
  - Home processors - 5 questions
  - Manufacturers - 7 questions
  - Regulators - 5 questions
- Data Collection
  - Gave office staff survey questions to ask non registered home processors – 49 surveys collected.
  - Mailed same survey to 37 registered home – 3 responded.

## Methodology (continued)

- Data Collection (continued)
  - Field Staff Online survey (Survey Monkey)
    - Response rate 30/21 (70%)
  - Mailed surveys to licensed commercial manufacturers
    - Response Rate 207/49 (24%)
- Analysis
  - Compared responses from manufacturers and inspectors

# Study Population

- Home processors, licensed manufacturers and food inspectors in Region 3.

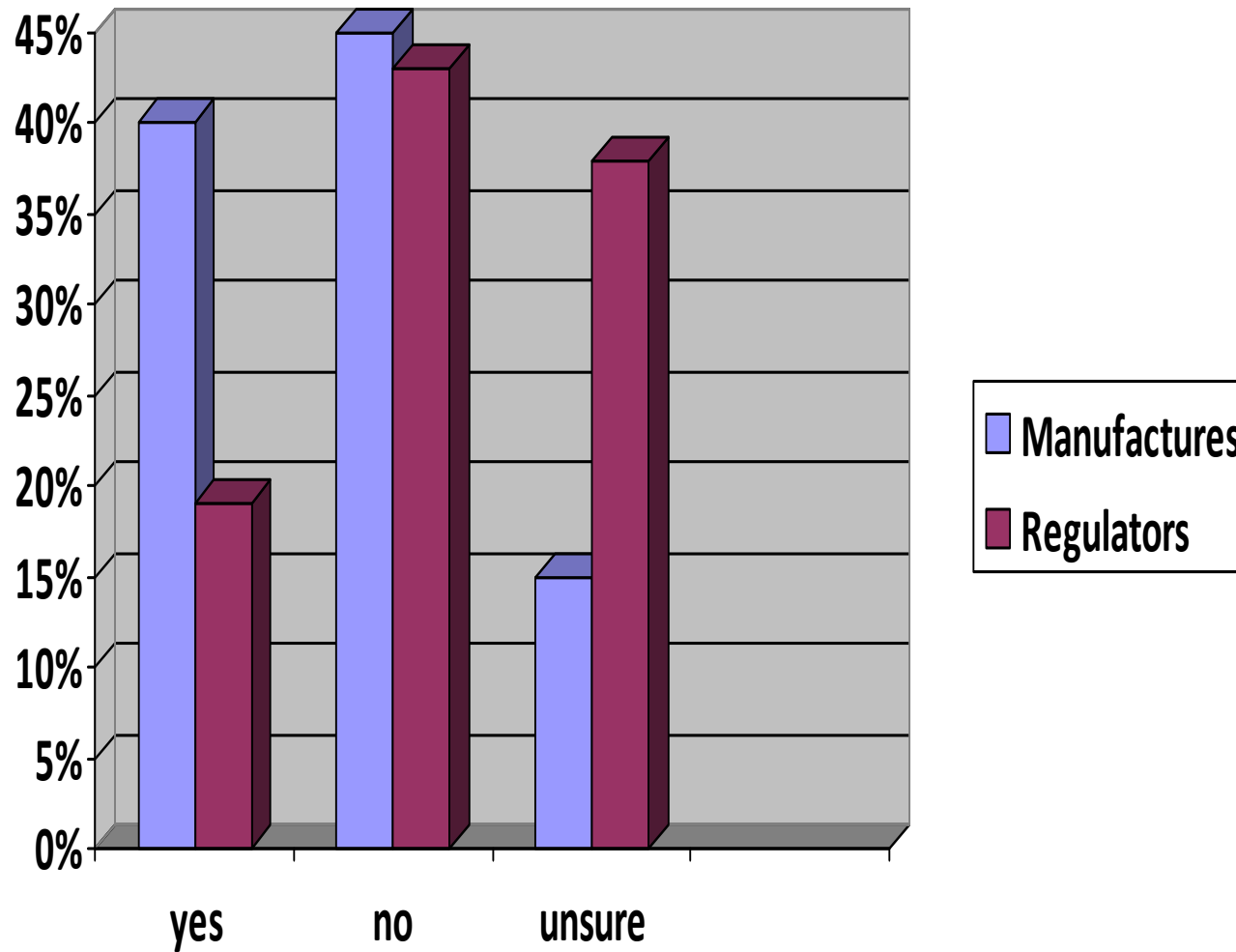


## Results: Manufacturers

- 46% of manufacturers do not consider home processed foods to be safe.
- Foods most considered to be unsafe were meat, poultry, seafood, dairy and salads.
- 82% believe training should be mandatory.
- 72% believe in routine inspections for home processors.



## Results: Safe Foods



## Results: Home Processors

- 71% have not taken any food safety courses.
- Top 5 foods made: Baked goods; jams/jellies; snacks; chocolate; herbal products.
- Selling sites: Farmers market (17); Retail stores (13); and schools, camps and a museum.

## Results: Inspectors

- 43% of inspectors do not consider home processed foods to be safe.
- Foods most considered to be unsafe were meat, seafood, dairy, pickled products and canned goods.

## Results

### **Top Three Minimum Safety Requirements:**

- Mandatory training.
- Routine inspections.
- Sanitation/GMPs—insect and vermin free clean kitchen.

## Conclusions

- Training should be required for home processors to learn safe food handling practices, food related hygiene/health concerns, approved sources, etc.
- Routine inspections should be conducted in home kitchens to verify continued use of good manufacturing practices.
- Home made products should be identified.

## Recommendations

### **Survey results based recommendation:**

- NYSDAM modify home processor policy to: Require routine inspections for home processors.
- Require mandatory training before a home processor can begin making products to sell the public.
- Require home processors to declare on the label that a food is home processed.

## References

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- Haupt, M. (2011). *Cottage industries*. The Austin Chronicle. Retrieved from: <http://www.austinchronicle.com/food/2011-11-25/cottage-industries/>

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# Questions?

## NYSDAM Approved Trainers

- HACCPplus.com
- EHA Consulting Group Inc.
- Food Service Associates
- Seguridad De Los Alimentos – Serve Safe
- Chinese Language Food Safety Course
- Complete list on AGM website

## Non-Response Reasons

- Are no longer processing.
- Are making disallowed products.
- Couldn't be bothered.
- Afraid of what survey could mean.

## Years Operating

- What percentage of home processors continue operating after 2 years, 5 years and 10 years?
  - Out of Business
  - 2005=2
  - 2006=24
  - 2007=130
  - 2008=53
  - 2009=314
  - 2010=122
  - 2011=269