

Kansas Legislators' Opinions about Food Safety Regulation of Hunger Relief Organizations

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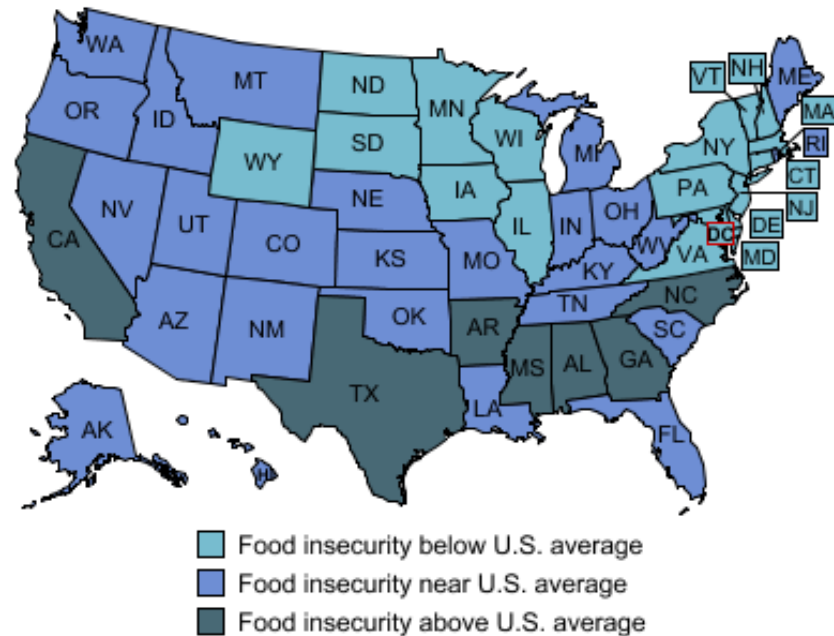
Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA)



Background

- Food insecurity—not having enough food
 - Commonly called “hunger”
- 14.9% of U.S. households are food insecure
 - Kansas has 14.5%

Prevalence of food insecurity, average 2009-11



Source: Calculated by ERS based on Current Population Survey Food Security Supplemental data.



Background (continued)

- Consumer perceptions
 - Feeding the hungry is good.
 - Food from home is safe.
- Dumpster Dive Café
 - Serves food “freecycled” from dumpsters.



Source: *Kickstarter.com*

Background (continued)

- Outbreaks have occurred at soup kitchens
 - Chattanooga, TN 2010—10 people to the ER, 26 diagnosed with food poisoning.
 - Denver 2012—60 people to the hospital.



Source: Stephen Mitchell, *The Denver Post*



Source: Staff, *WRCB TV*



Background (continued)

- Hunger Organizations—groups providing food to food insecure people.
- Examples:
 - Food banks
 - Soup kitchens
 - Food pantries
- A 2012 Kansas law change exempted soup kitchens, food pantries, etc., from food safety licensing.
- Food banks are still licensed (“wholesale”).



Source: Elev8.com



Problem Statement

Given the volume and complexity of foods managed and handled by hunger relief organizations, it is imperative that food safety regulations are appropriate and effective. The opinions of legislators who create the laws that impact food safety regulation of hunger relief organizations are not well documented.



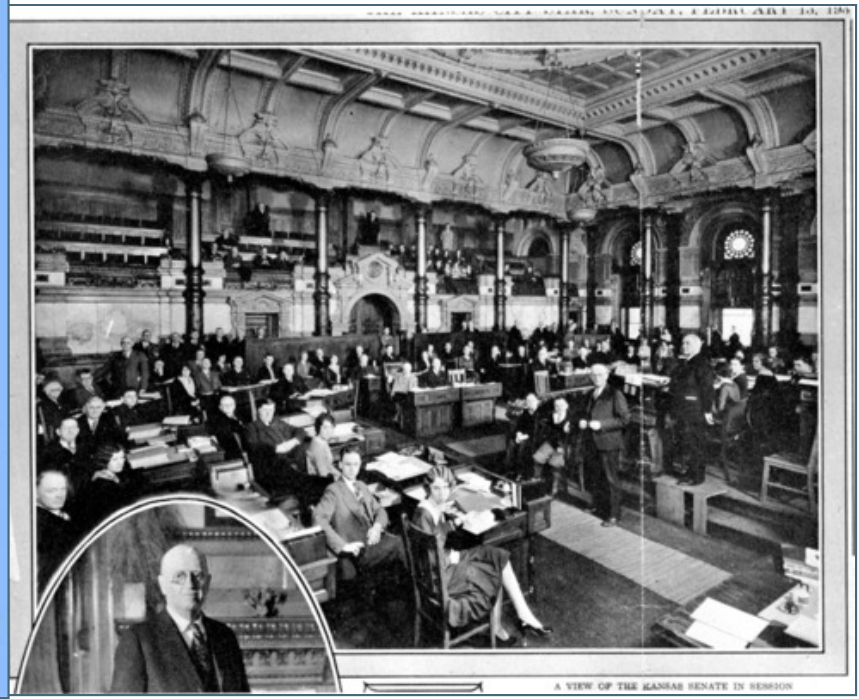
Source: thecoloradoobserver.com

Methodology

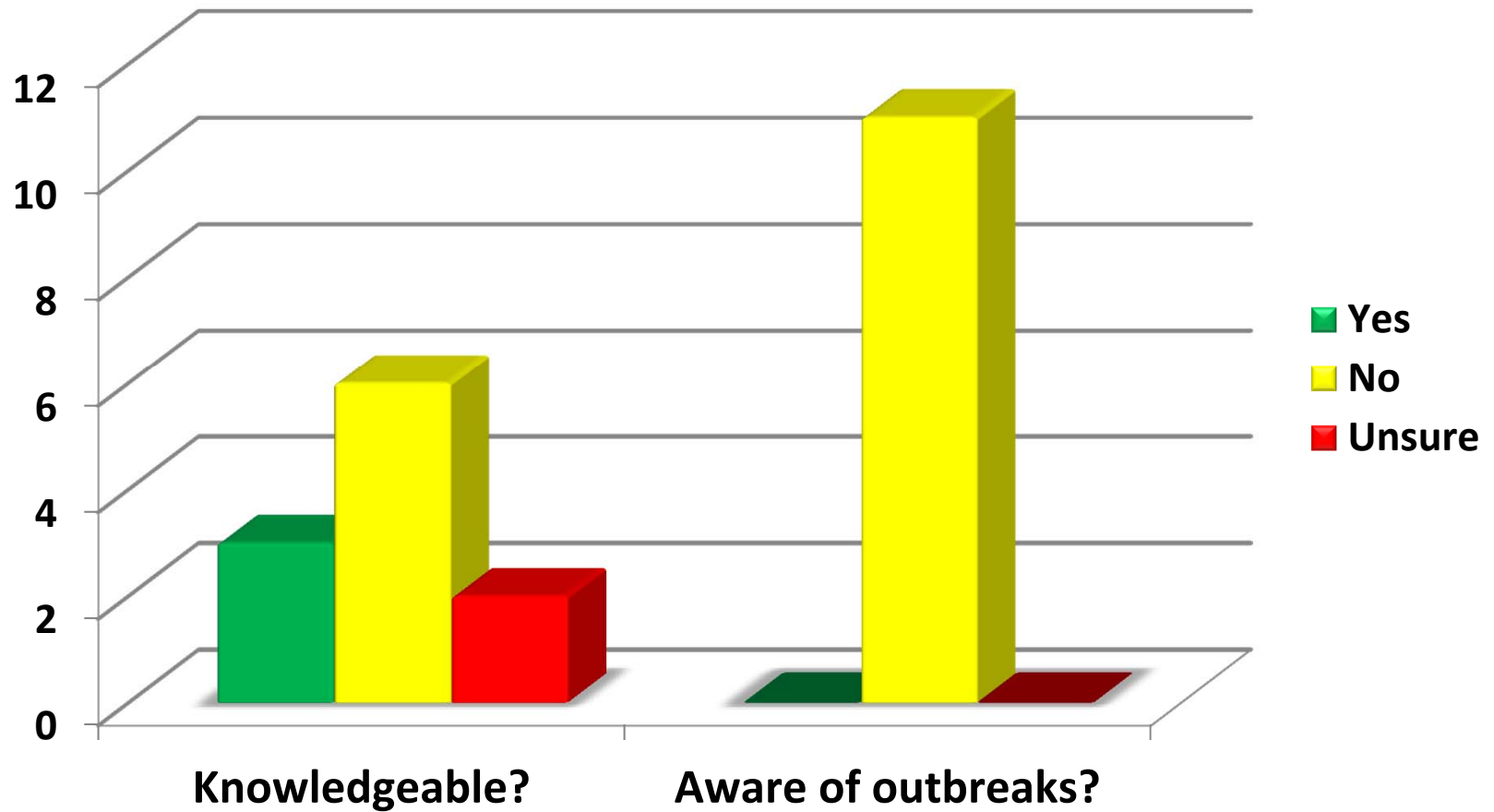
- Food Donation Regulation Survey
 - Self-assessment of food safety knowledge.
 - Awareness of food donation associated foodborne illness outbreaks.
 - Level of agreement with three statements.
- Data collection
 - On-line survey (Survey Monkey)
 - Response Rate 11/57 (19.3%)
- Analysis
 - Nominal data—reported frequencies

Study Population

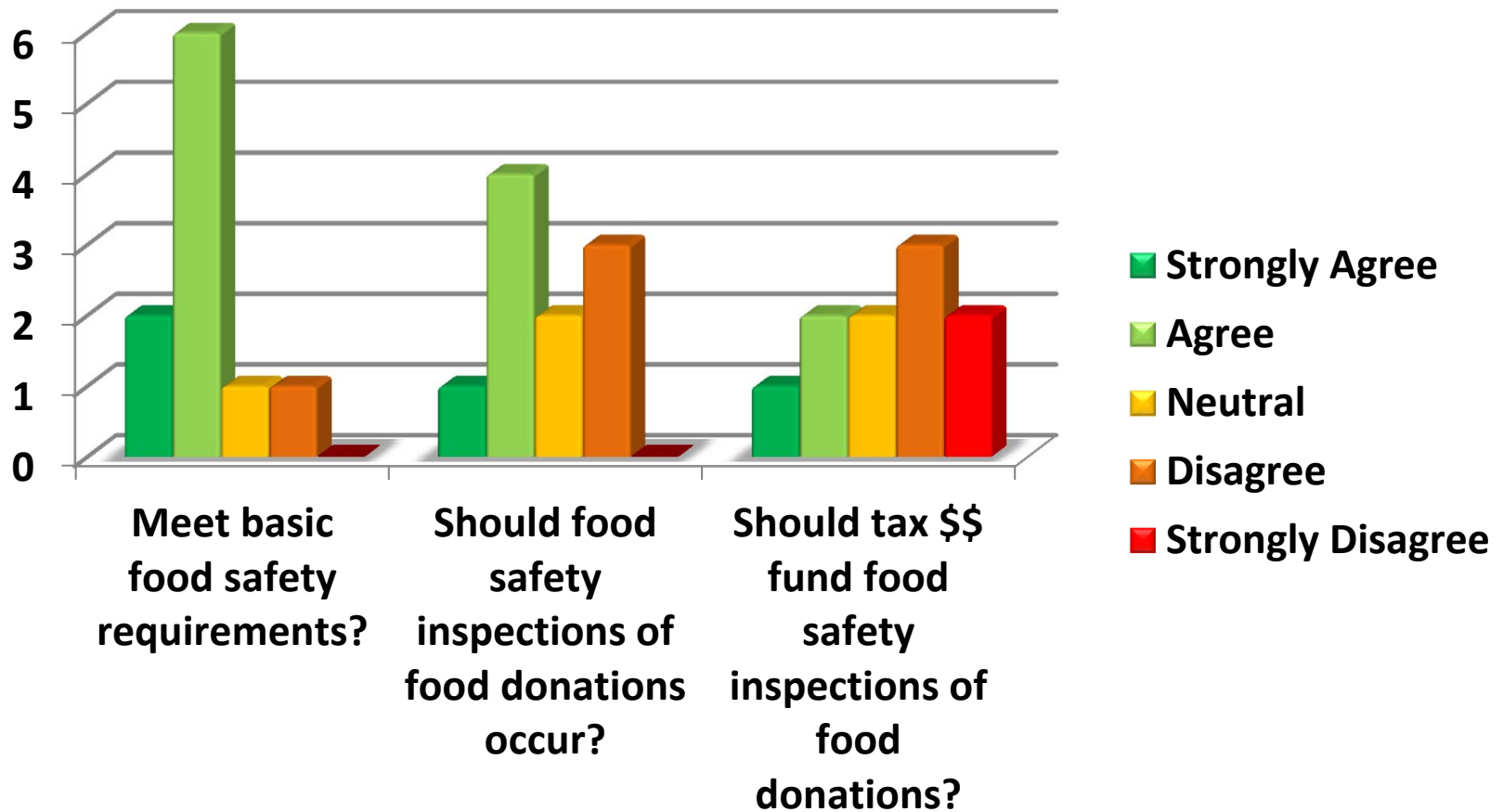
- Kansas Legislators: House and Senate Health Committees and Agriculture Committees



Results



Results (continued)



Results (continued)

Respondent comments:

- “do know about the ‘good samaritan’ state law [sic].”
- “State inspectors are more interested in ‘finding’ problems and preserving their positions than safety.”
- “soup kitchens and food pantries should follow basic food safety measures.”

Conclusions

- Give a person a fish...
 - And you will need a Seafood HACCP plan
 - And a license
- Don't survey legislators during an election.

Conclusions

- Strong majority of Kansas State Legislators support safe food donations.
- No consensus among these legislators about the role of food safety regulators regarding food donations.
- No consensus among these legislators about how to fund food safety activities regarding food donations.
- The Legislators appear to lack of knowledge about the issue.
- There may be some sentiment that food safety is not the primary concern of food safety inspectors.

Recommendations

- KDA should consider outreach to legislators to educate them about food safety risks associated with food donations.
- KDA should consider discussions with legislators to explore funding mechanisms.
- AFDO should consider a Position Statement supporting food safety regulatory activities of establishments handling food donations.
- CDC should consider adding “Hunger relief organization” as “location of exposure” on CDC NORS form CDC 52.13.

References

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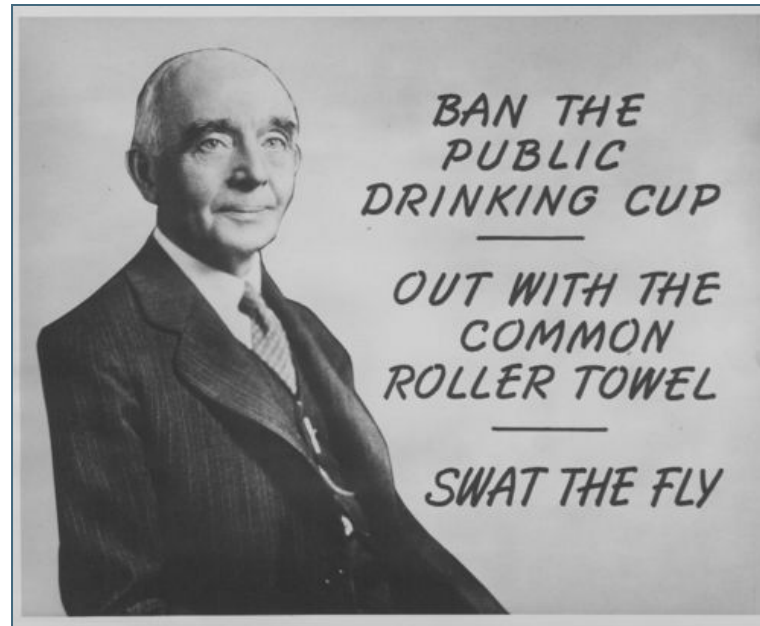
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Questions?



Source: www.crumbineaward.com