What is Really Going On with Food Safety Culture & FSMS in Retail Food Establishments?

Results from the 2021 AFDO Food Retailer Large Brands Survey

Purpose

The purpose of this study, as outlined in the Retail Food Safety Regulatory Association Collaborative Action Plan, was to understand the current state of food safety culture among U.S. food establishments. In addition, the study investigated the current state of Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS), including the practice of Active Managerial Control (AMC).

The findings provided a glimpse into best practices among the nation's leading brands and revealed opportunities to improve both food safety culture and FSMS. The potential may even exist for expanding the definitions of food safety culture itself.

Retail Food Safety Regulatory Association Collaborative

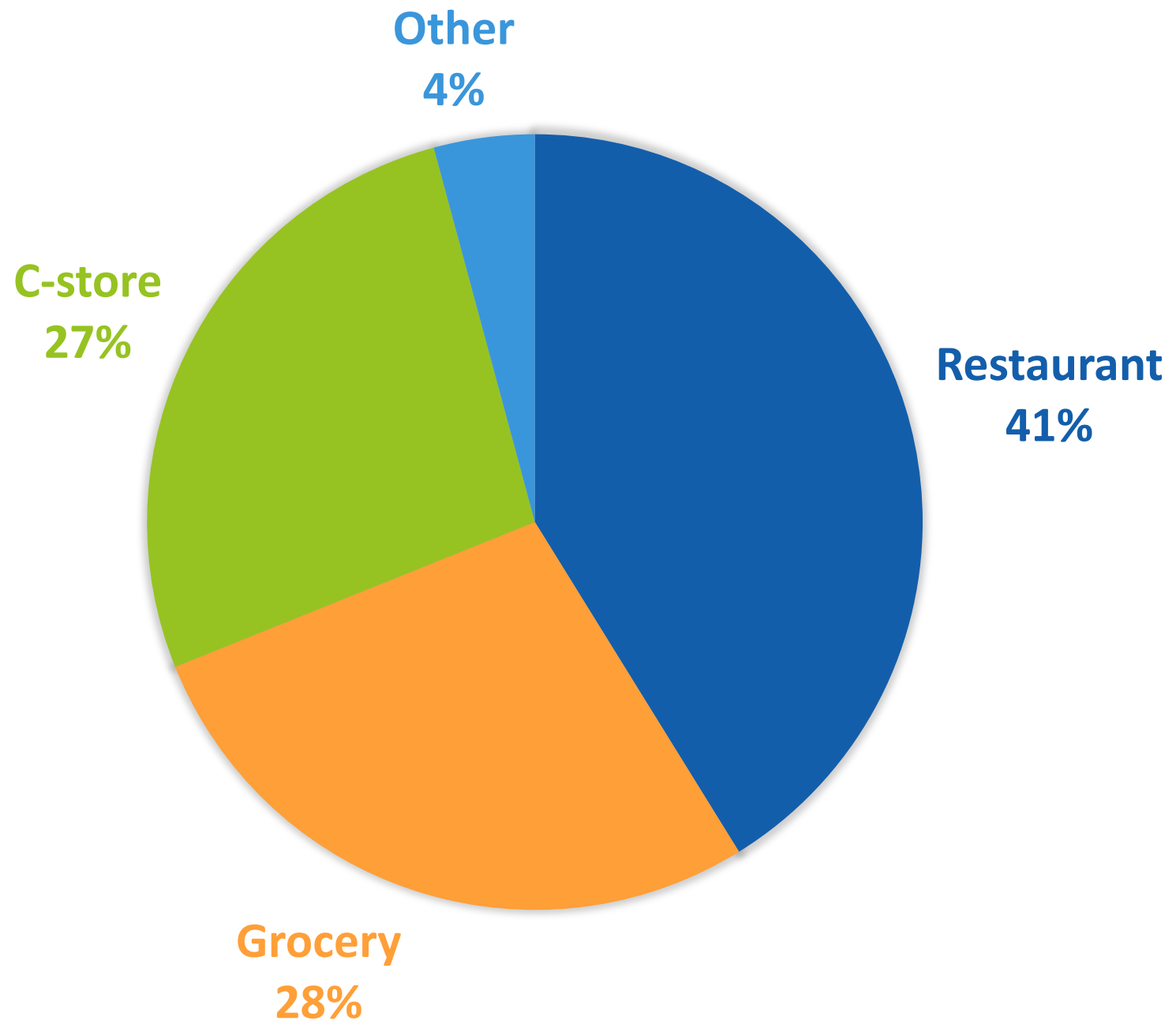
Food Safety Magazine Cover Story, April/May 2023

By Mark S. Miklos, CP-FS, Advisory Partner, Active Food Safety; Elizabeth A. Nutt, M.P.H., Retail Food Safety Director, Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO); Steven Mandernach, J.D., Executive Director, AFDO; Susan W. Arendt, Ph.D., Professor, Iowa State University; and Yang Xu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Hawaii at Mānoa

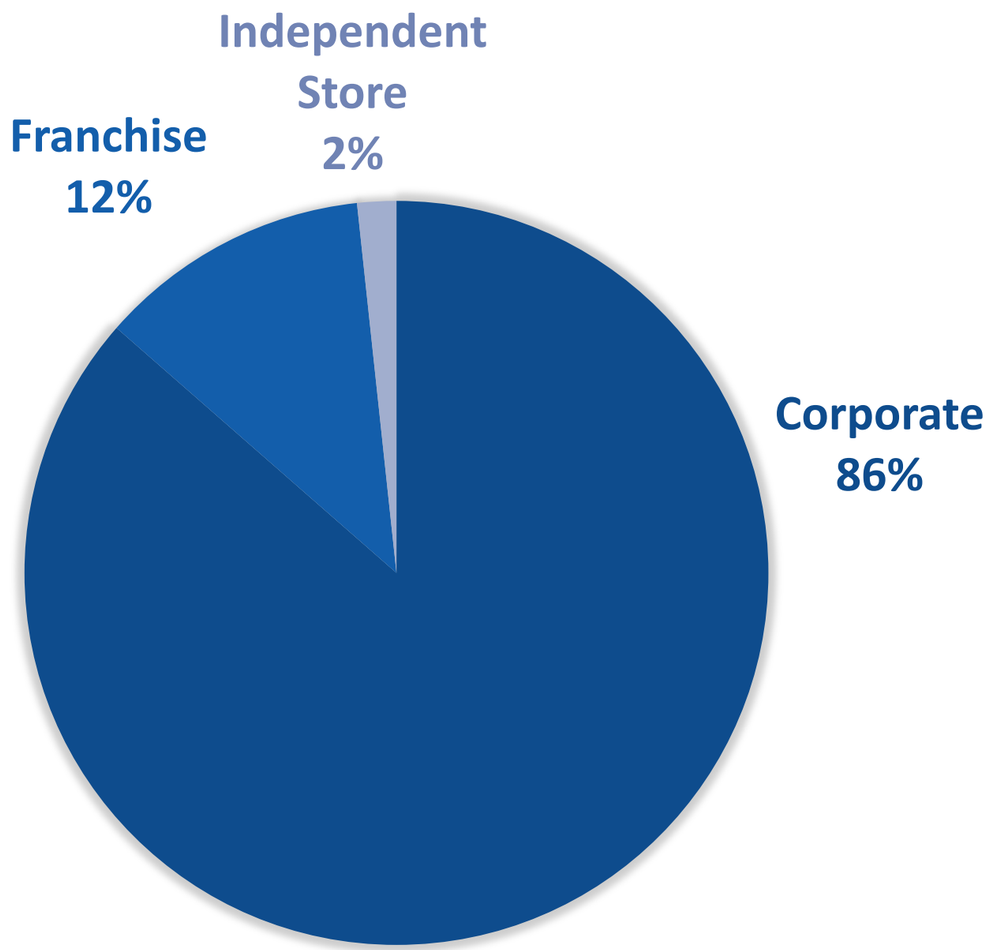
https://digitaledition.food-safety.com/april-may-2023/feature-cover-story/

Survey Demographics

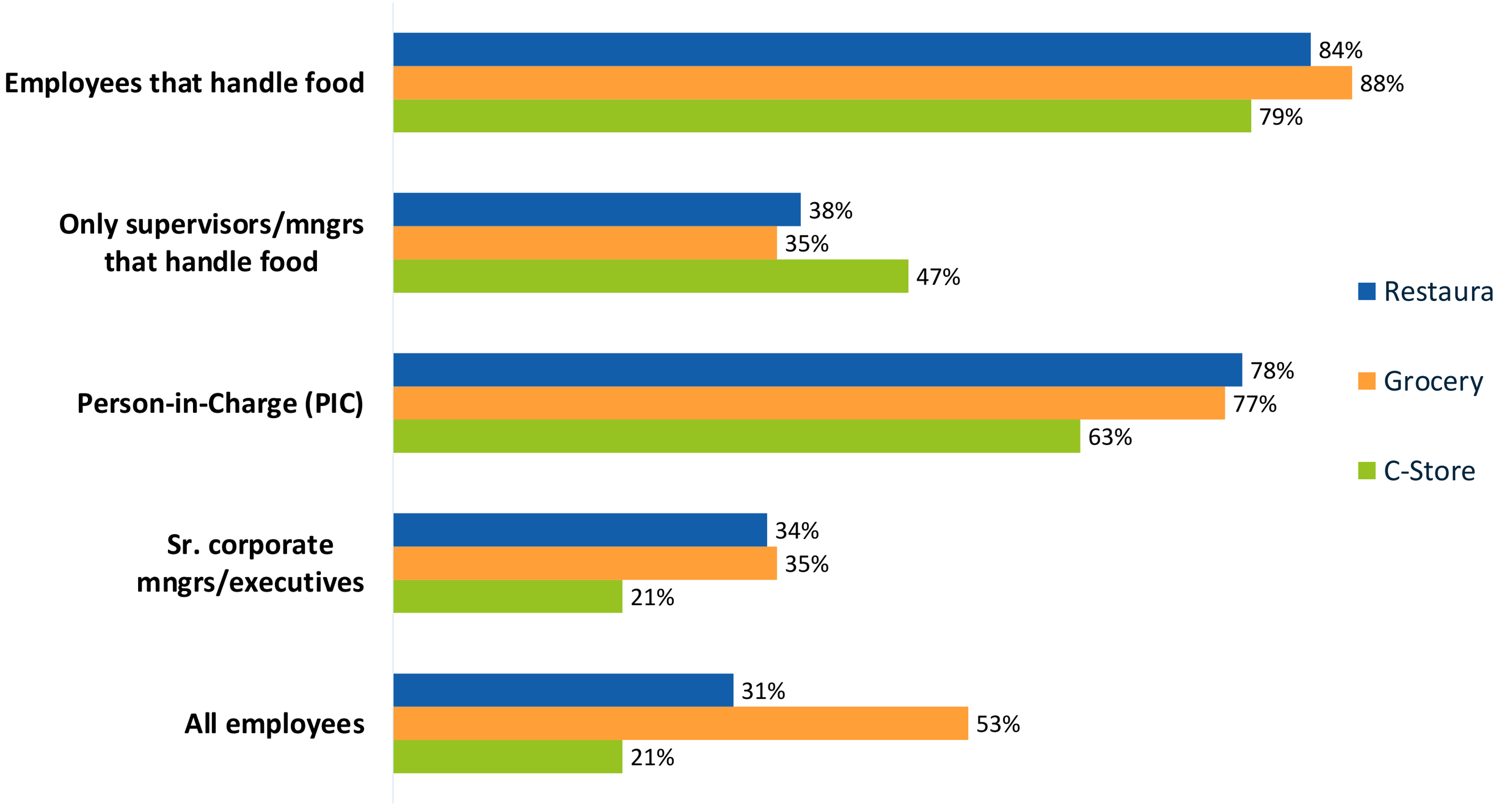
BUSINESS TYPE



OWNERSHIP TYPE



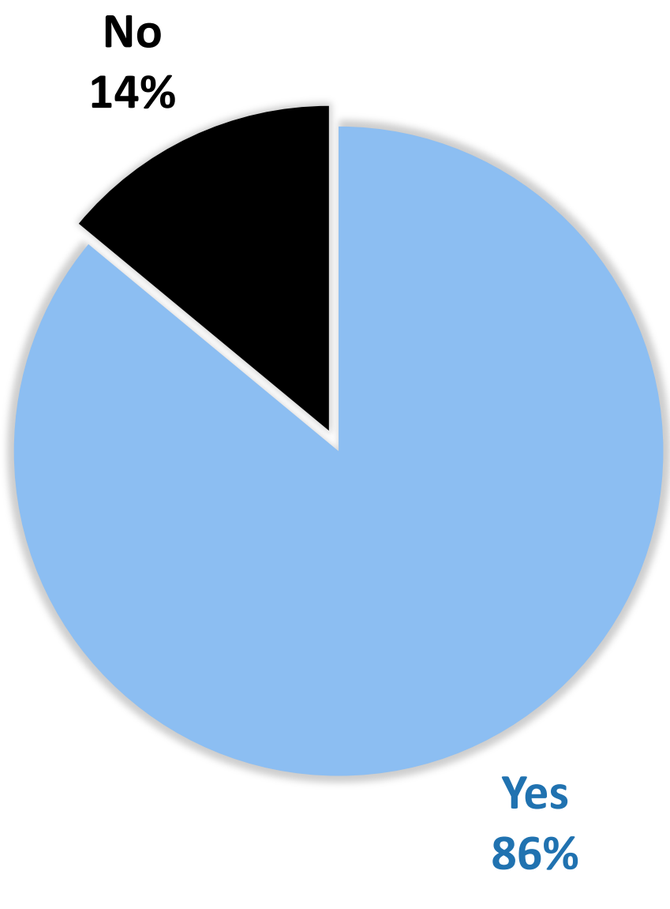
Personnel Receiving Food Safety Training by Industry Segment



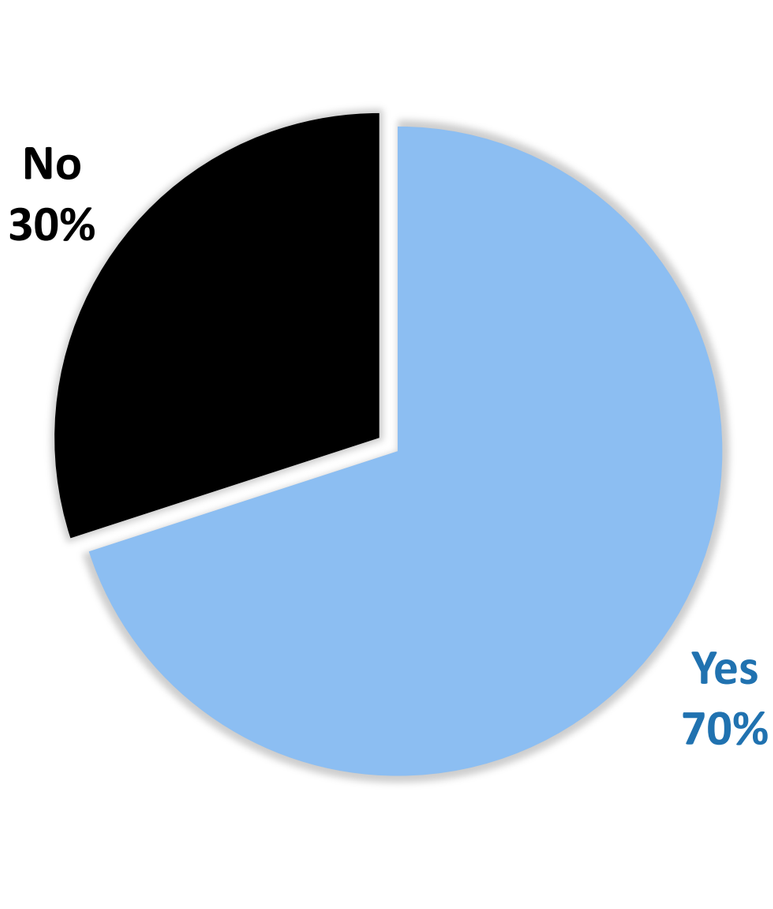
Other things Going Well

PREREQUISITE PROGRAMS

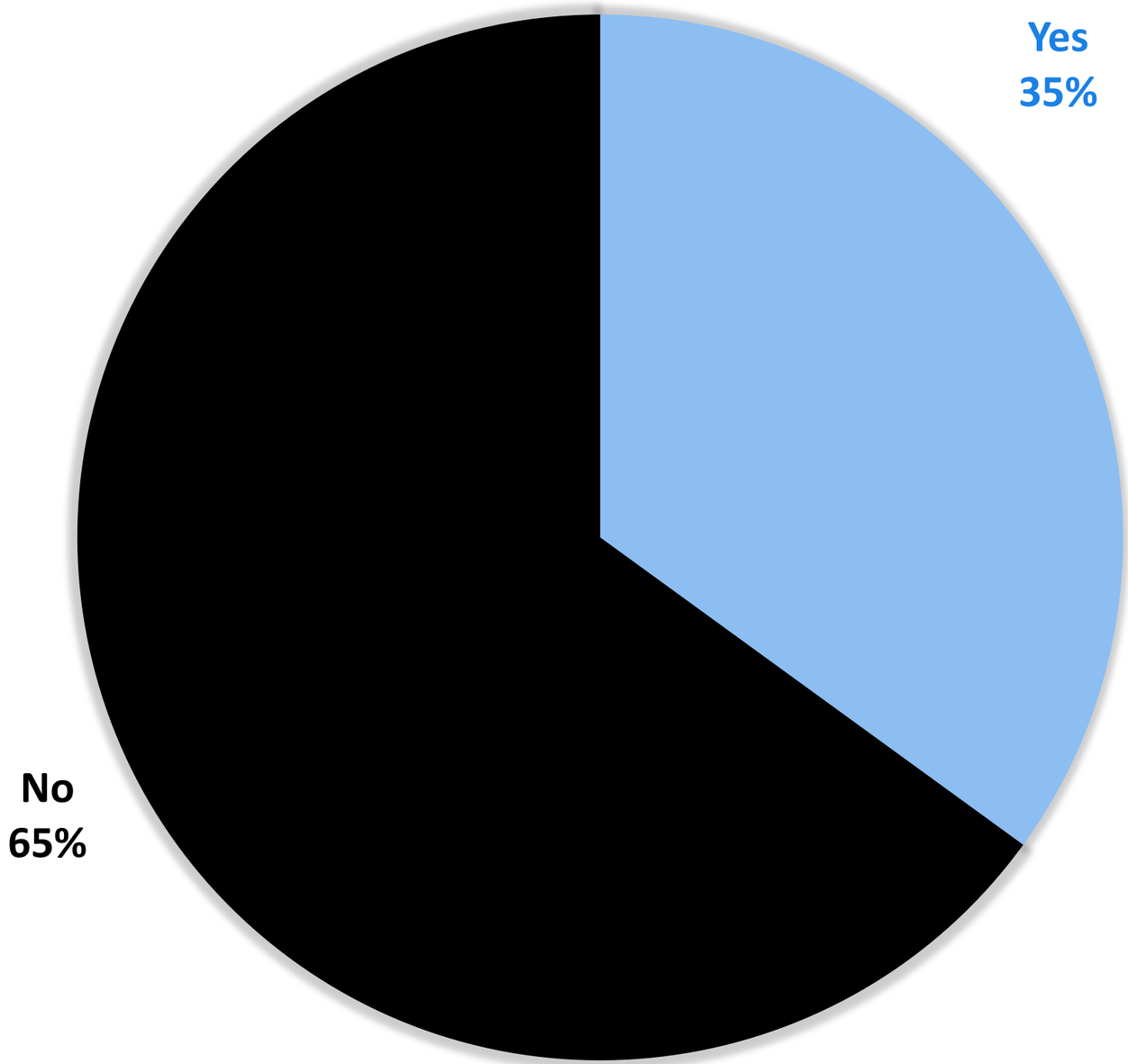
MONITORING & DOCUMENTATION



PROCESS HACCP

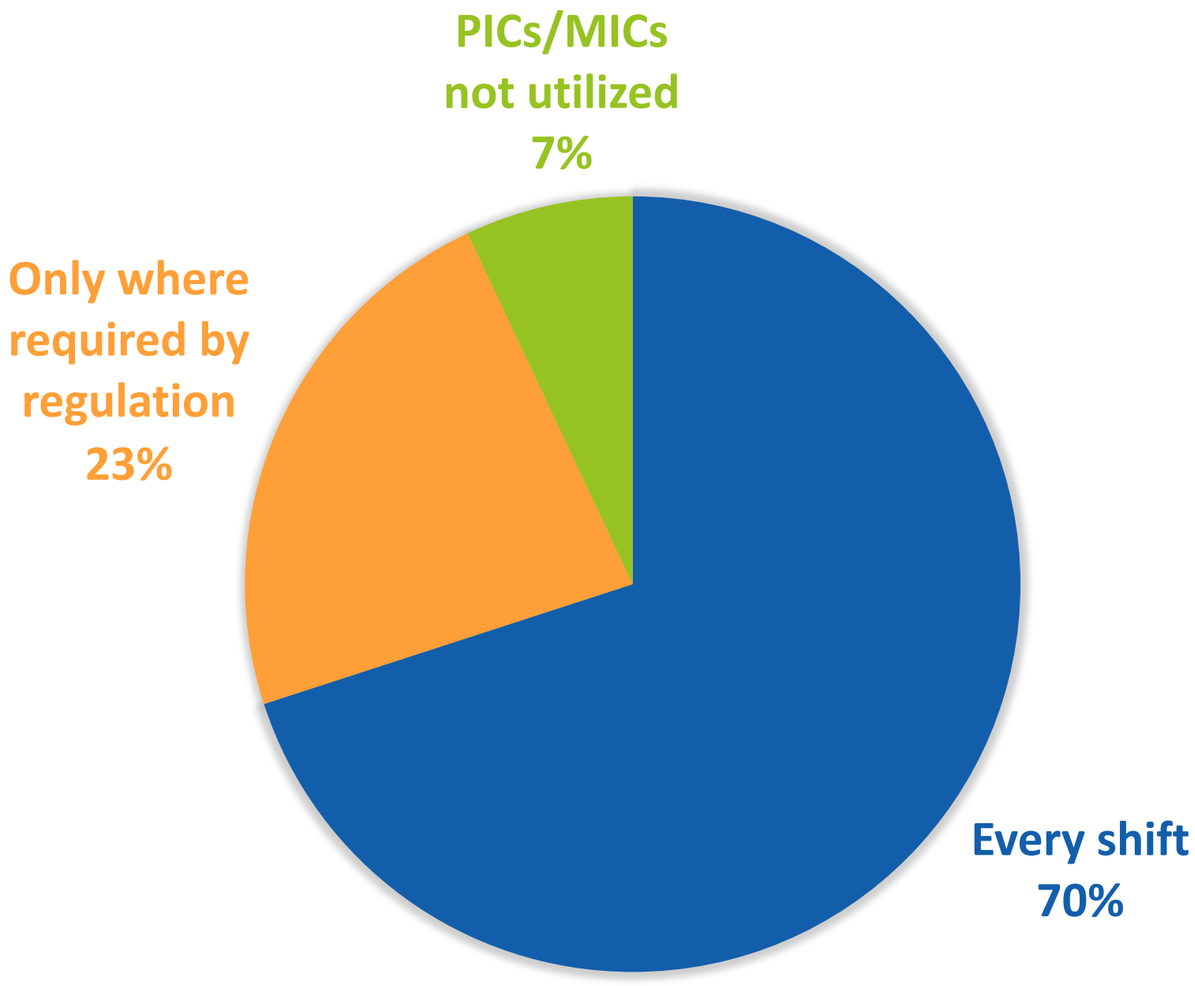


Use of FDA Training Resources

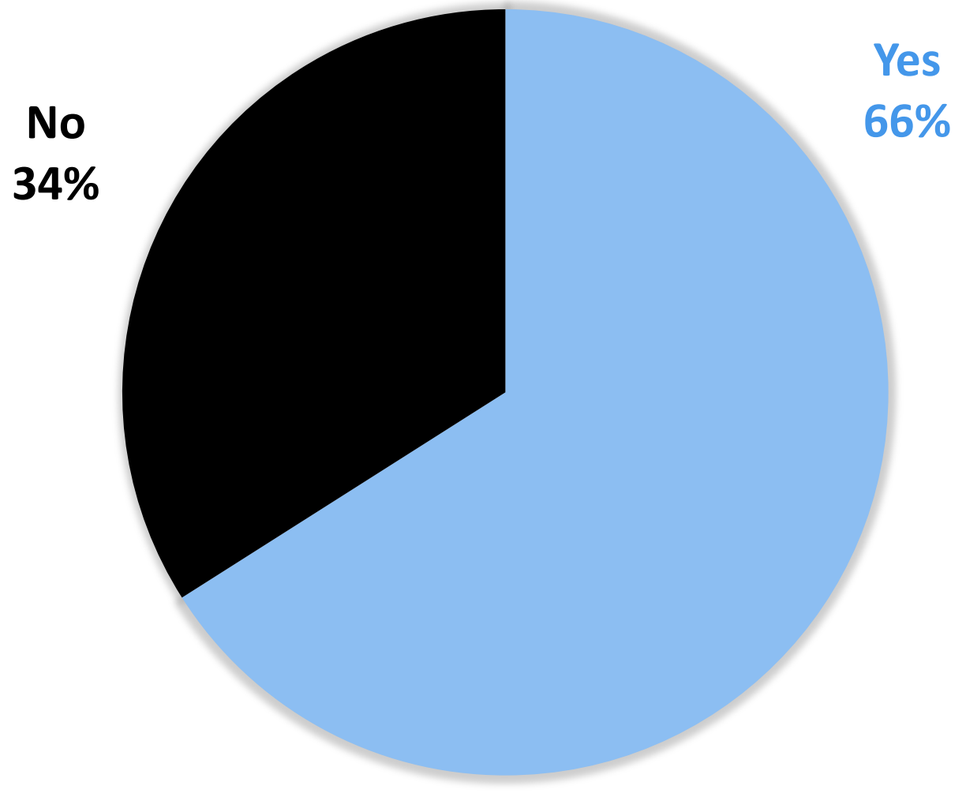


Management Presence & Certification

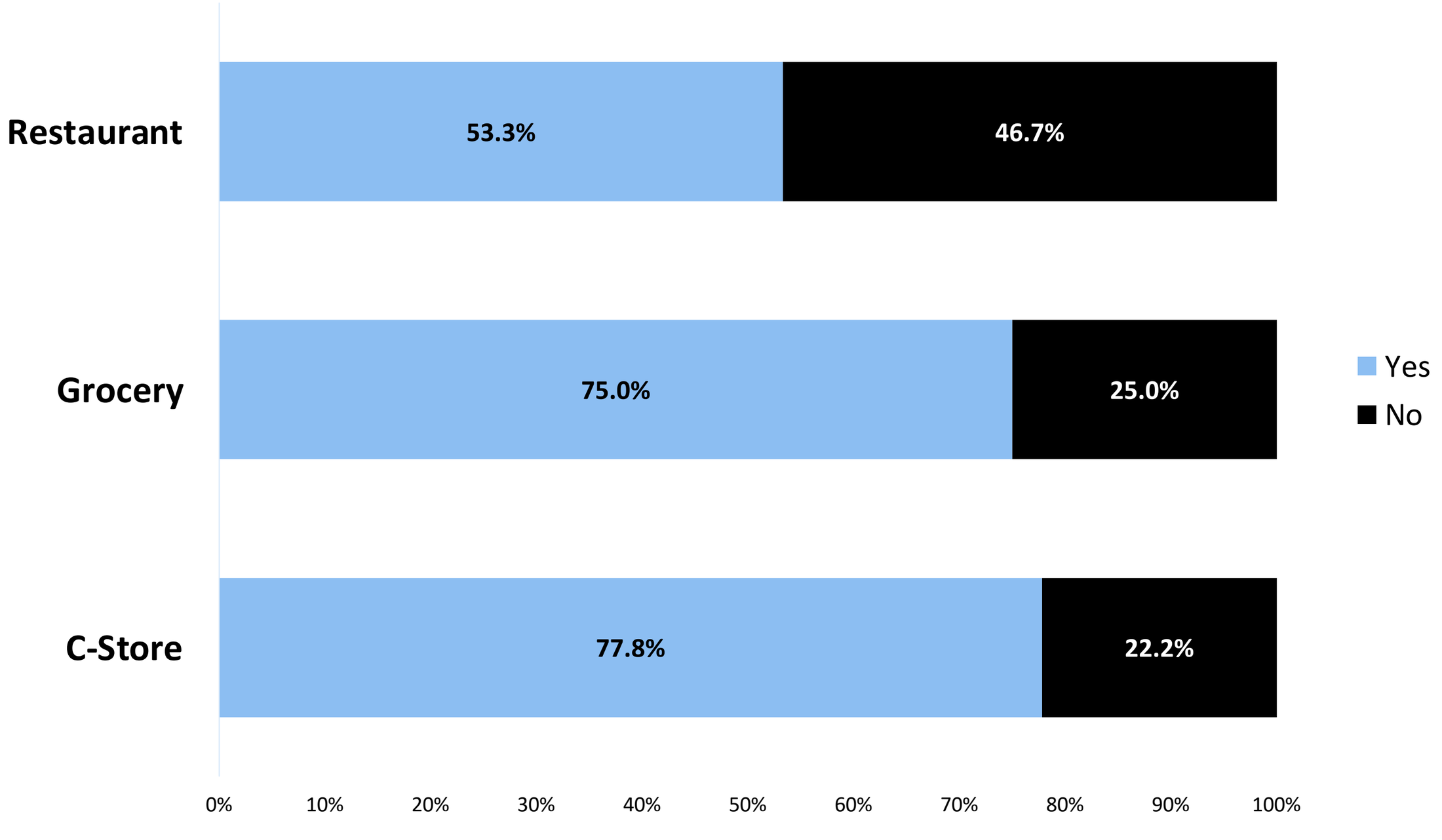
PIC/MIC PRESENT FOR EVERY SHIFT



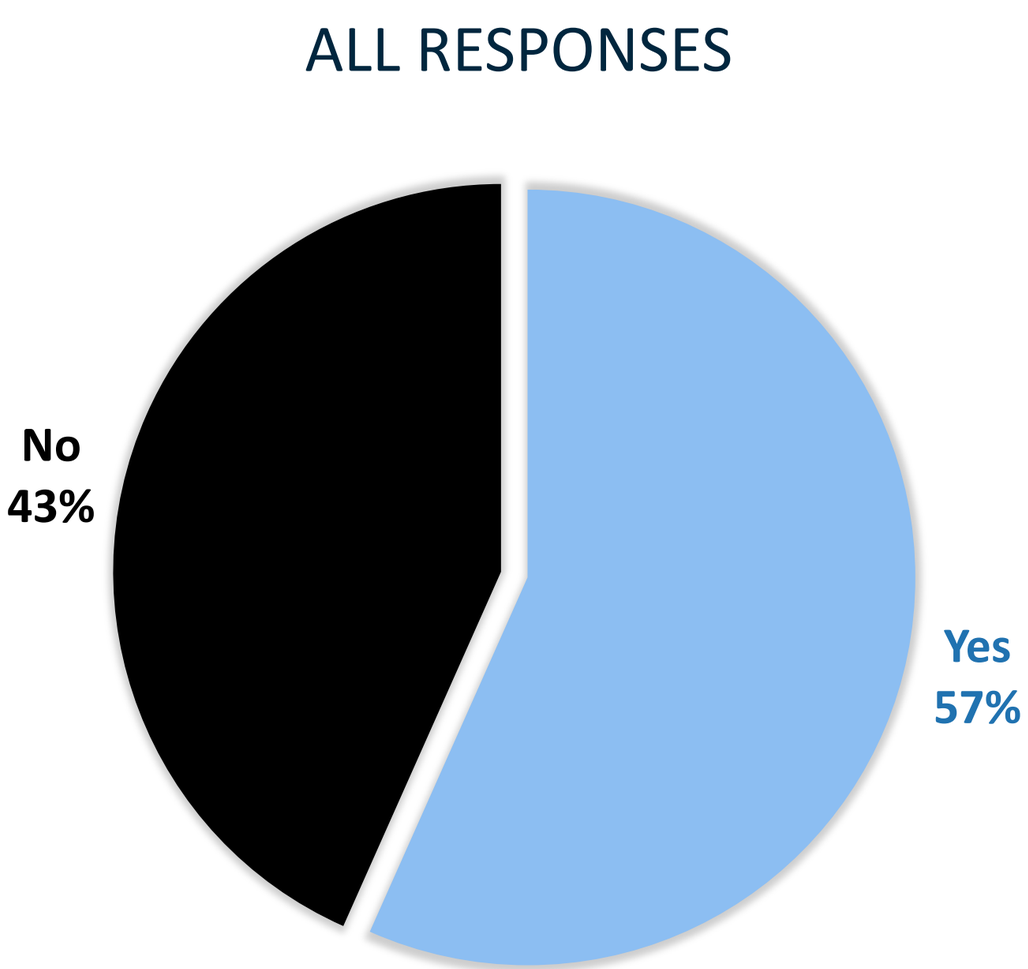
EVERY PIC/MIC IS A CFPM

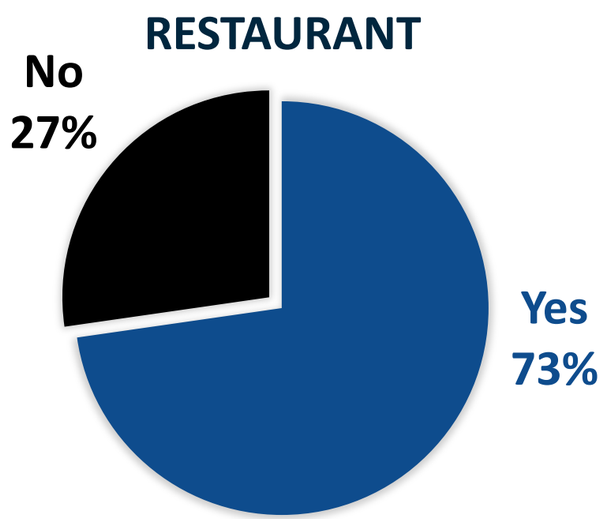


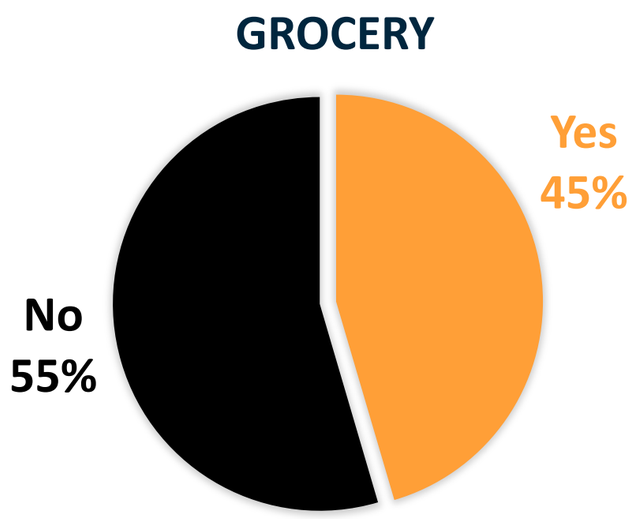
PIC is a CFPM by Industry Segment

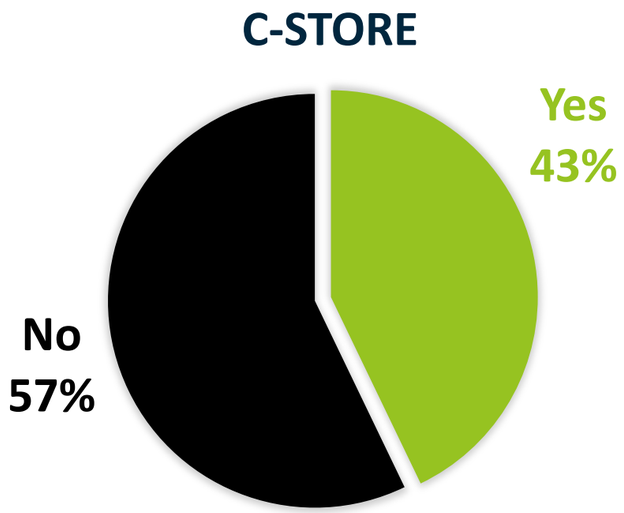


Conduct Supplier Audits



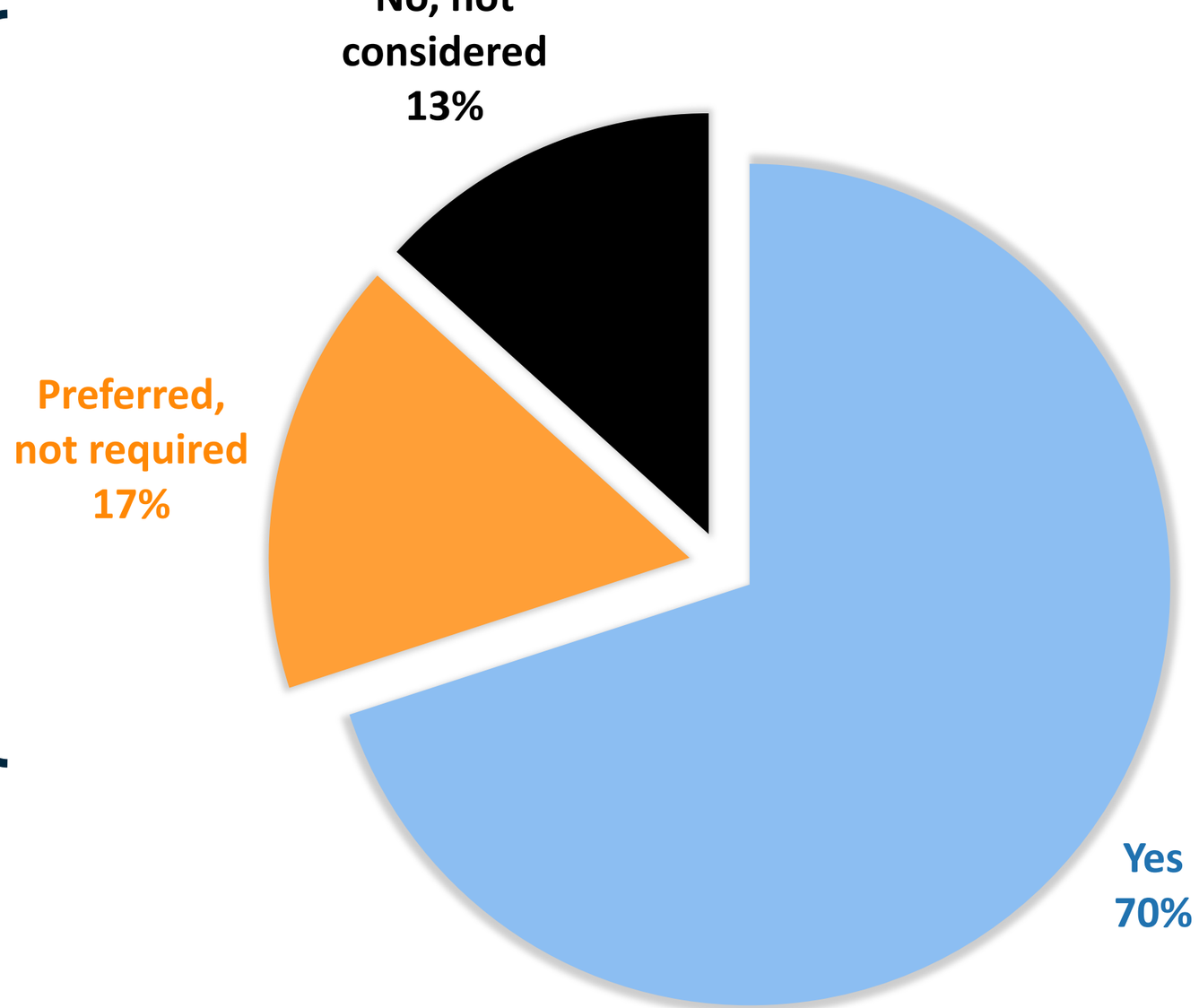






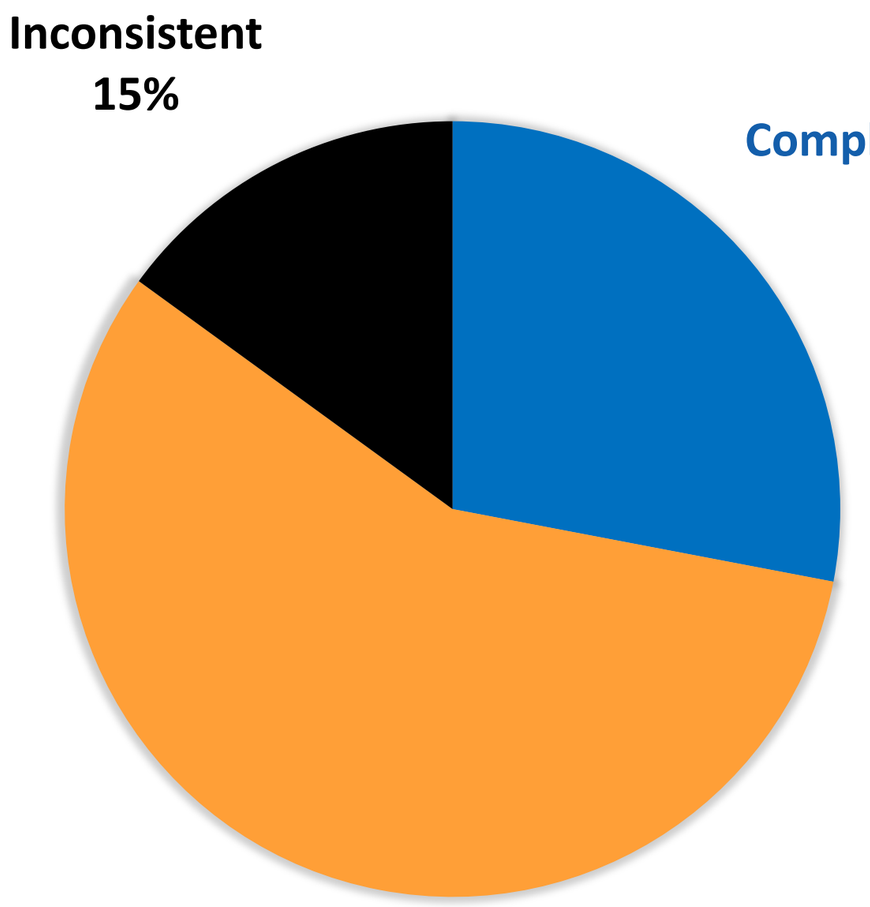
Supplier's Food Safety Culture as a Business Decision

This 30% Represents 101,100 units

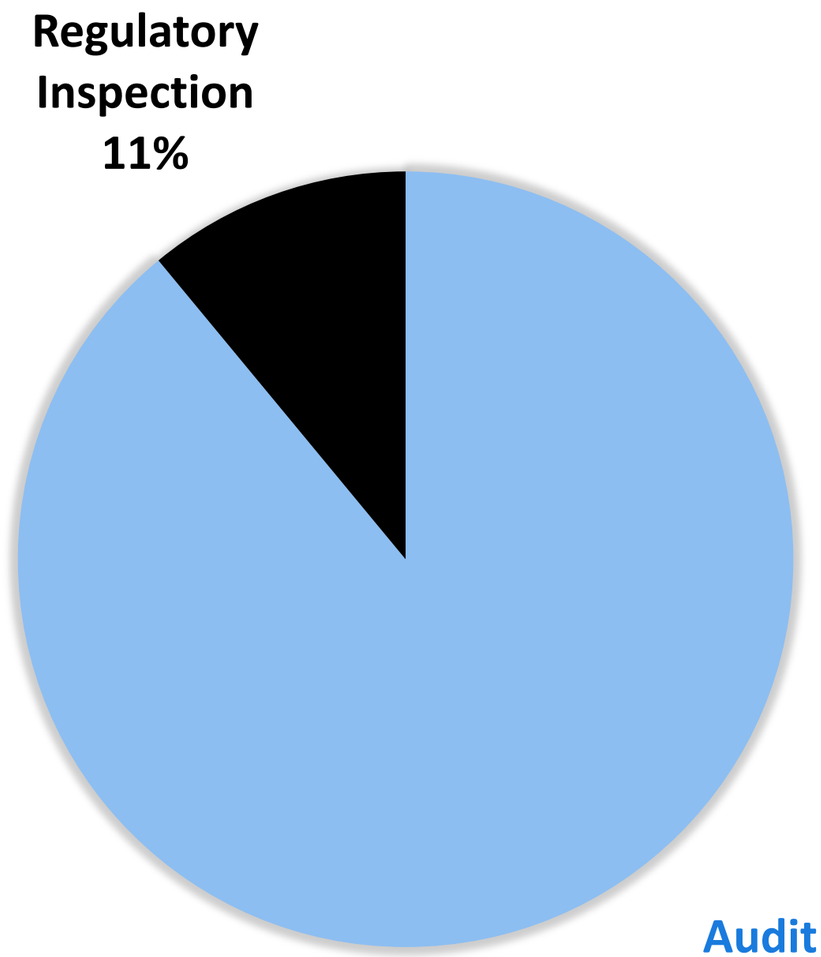


Audit & Regulatory Inspection Consistency

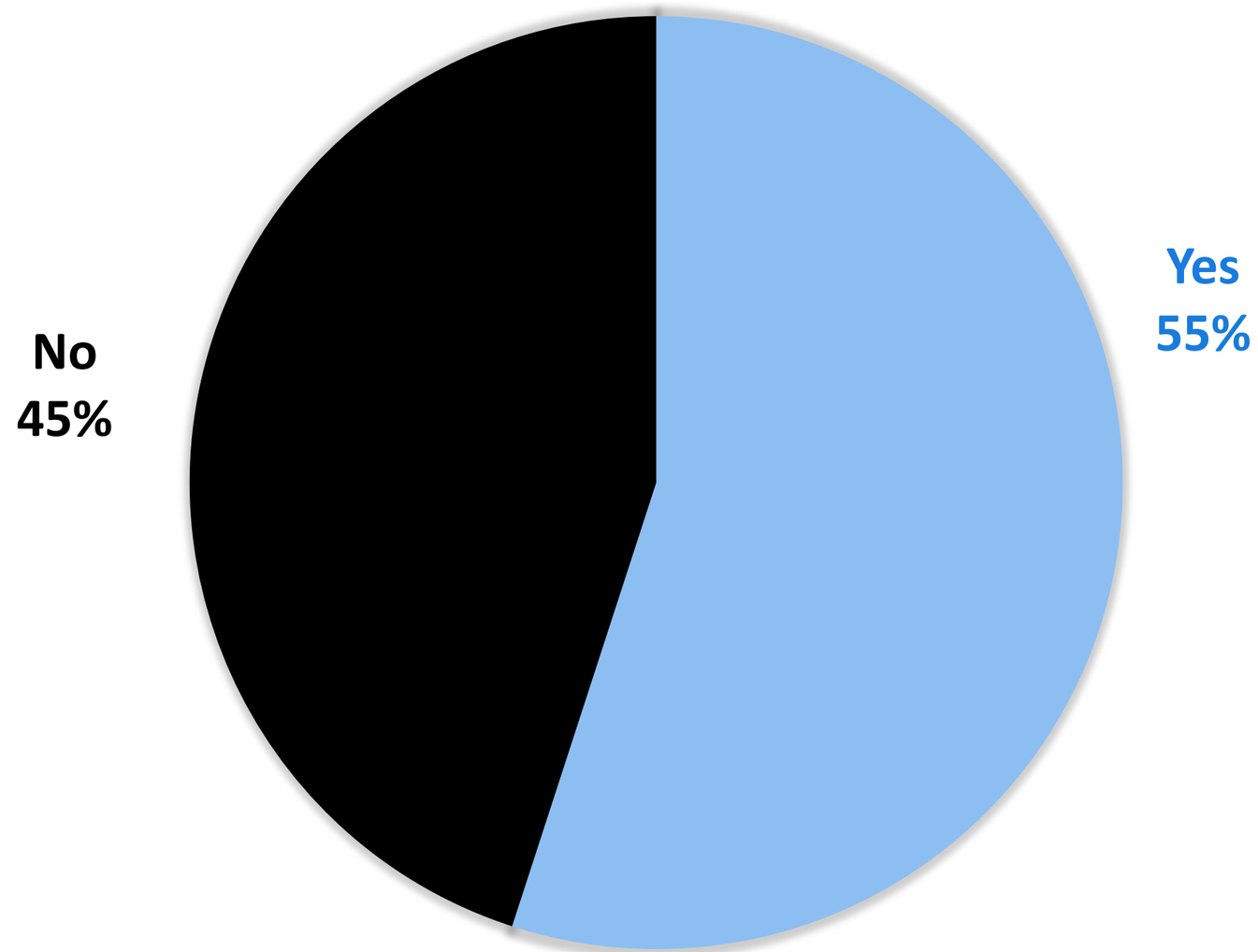
DEGREE OF CONSISTENCY



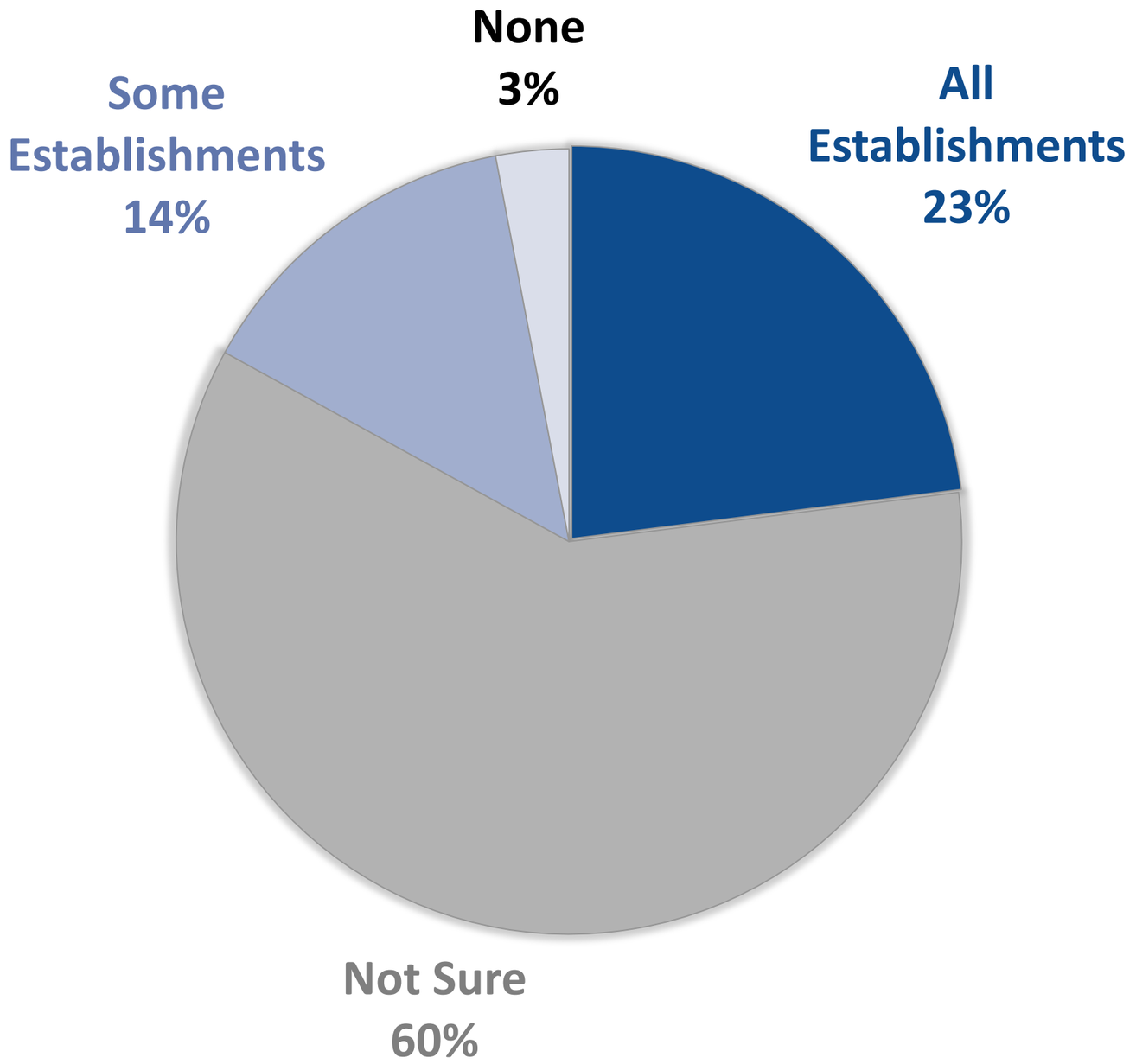
WHERE INCONSISTENT, WHICH IS BETTER AT IDENTIFYING RISK FACTORS



Develop FSMS with Regulatory Help



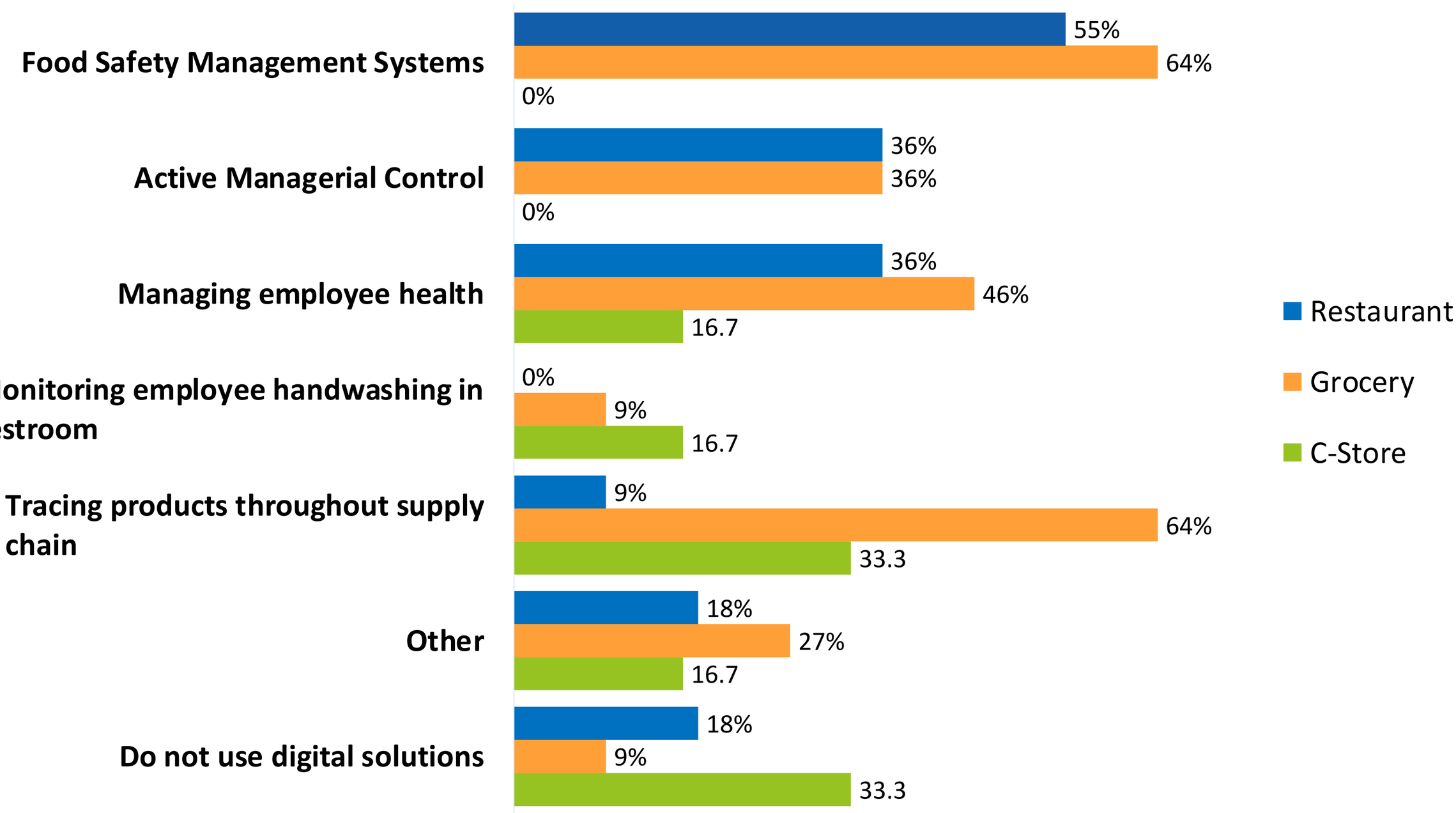
Percent of Food Establishments Assessed by Regulatory Authority for AMC



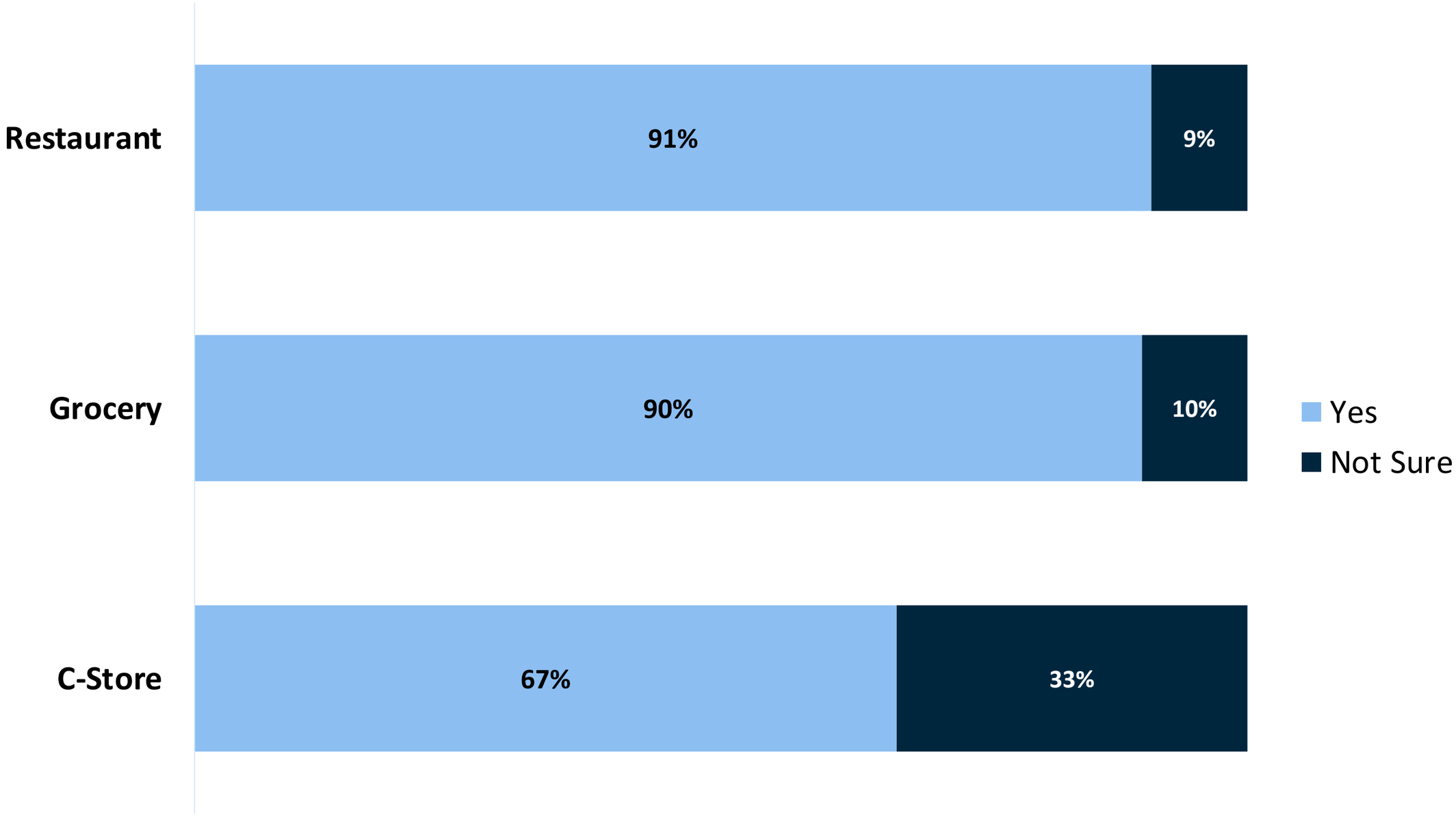
Examples of Public Health Interventions

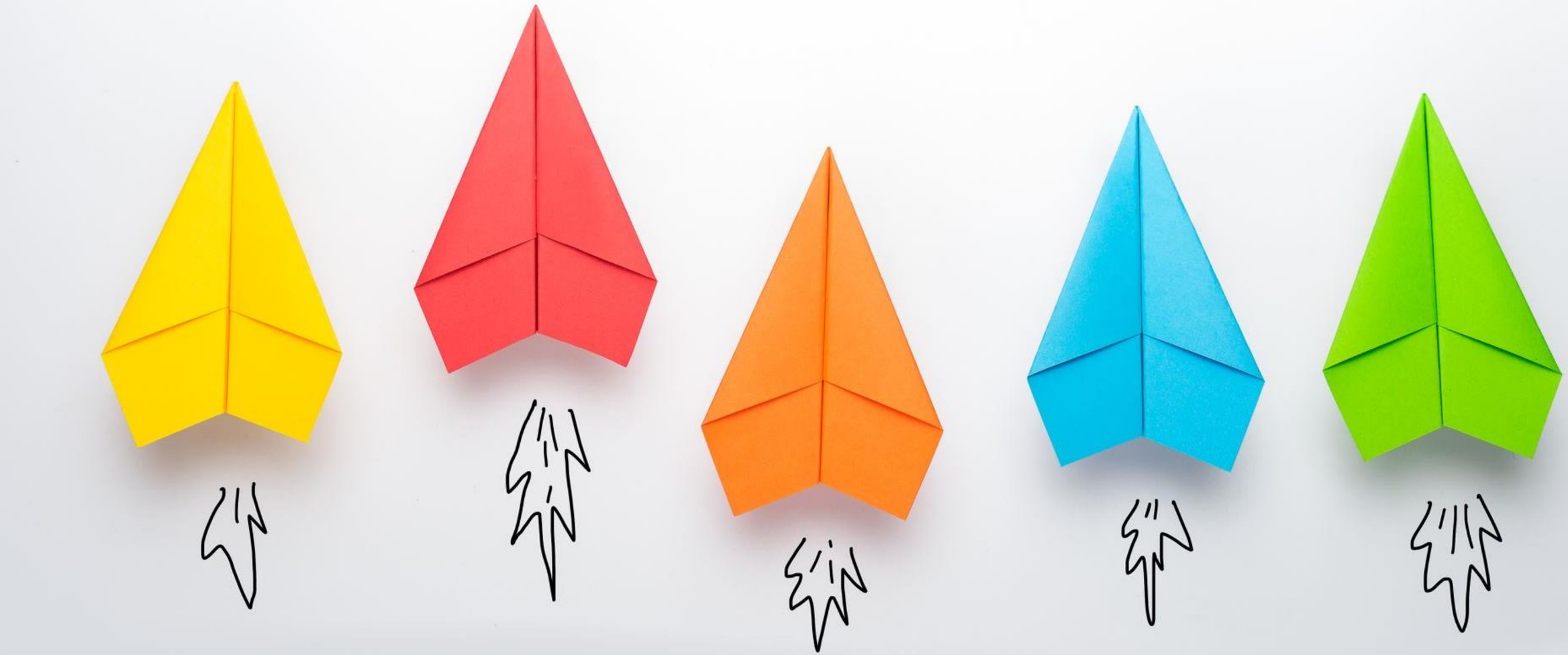
- **Demonstration of knowledge:** Set goals and provide bonuses, require certification, perform training evaluation/knowledge checks
- **Employee health controls:** Provide training and orientation, have health policy in place, do daily health screens, use employee health reporting agreement, manager monitors
- **Controlling hands as a vehicle of contamination:** Provide supplies and tools, provide training, signage, standard operating procedures
- **Time and temperature parameters for controlling pathogens:** Provide training, time/temperature monitoring and recording, and HACCP controls including the process HACCP approach
- **Consumer advisory:** Post signage, use messaging, and train employees

Use of Digital Solutions to Facilitate Food Safety



Universally Adopted Food Code is Beneficial



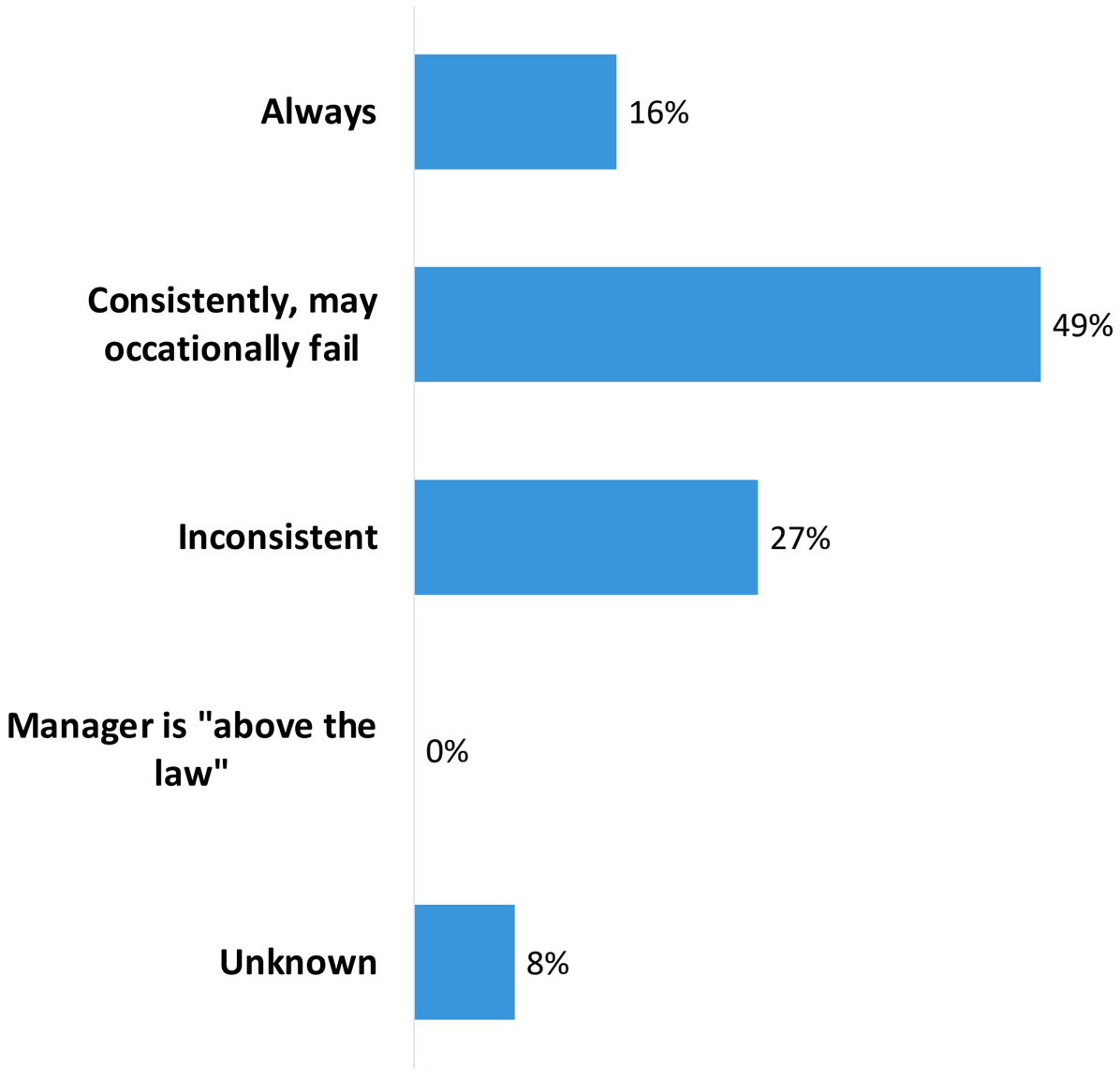


Five Opportunities

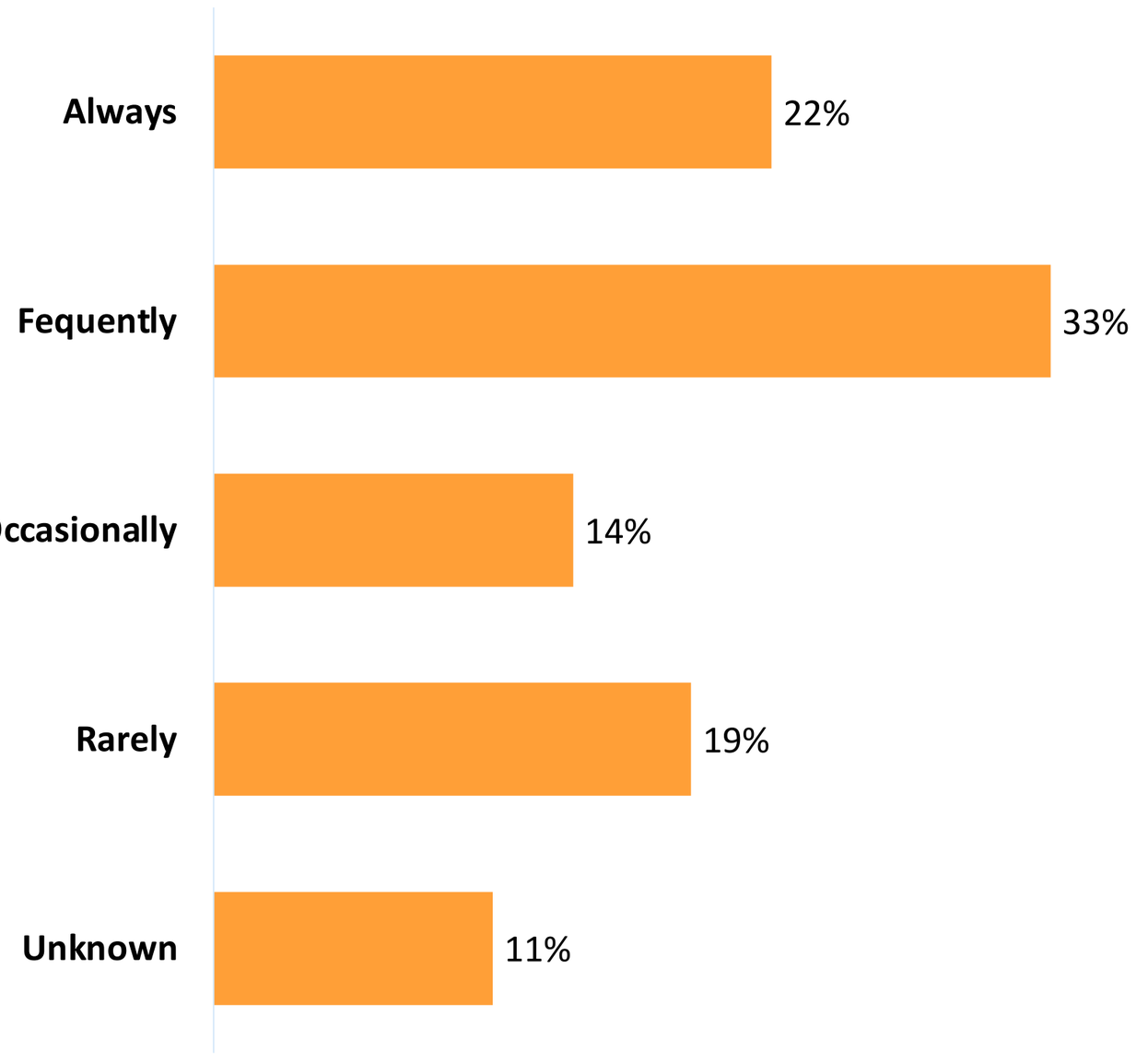
to immediately improve a brand's food safety culture and FSMS

Improve Management Practices

MANAGEMENT LEADS BY EXAMPLE

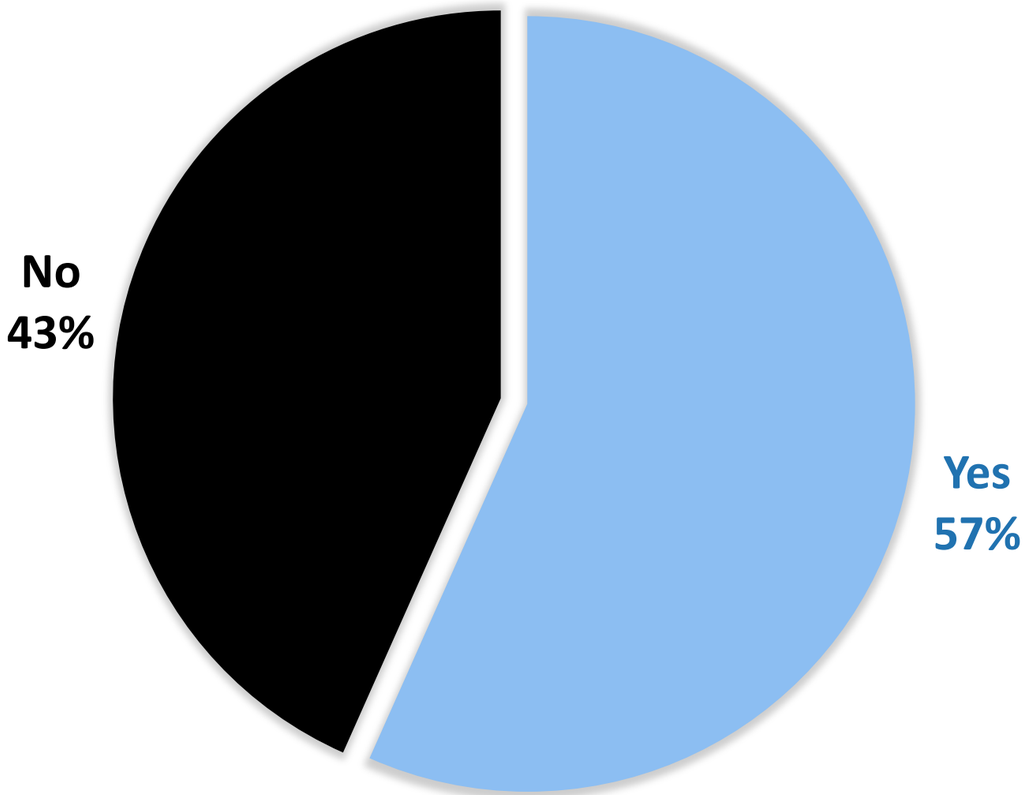


MANAGEMENT COACHES TO CORRECT UNSAFE PRACTICES

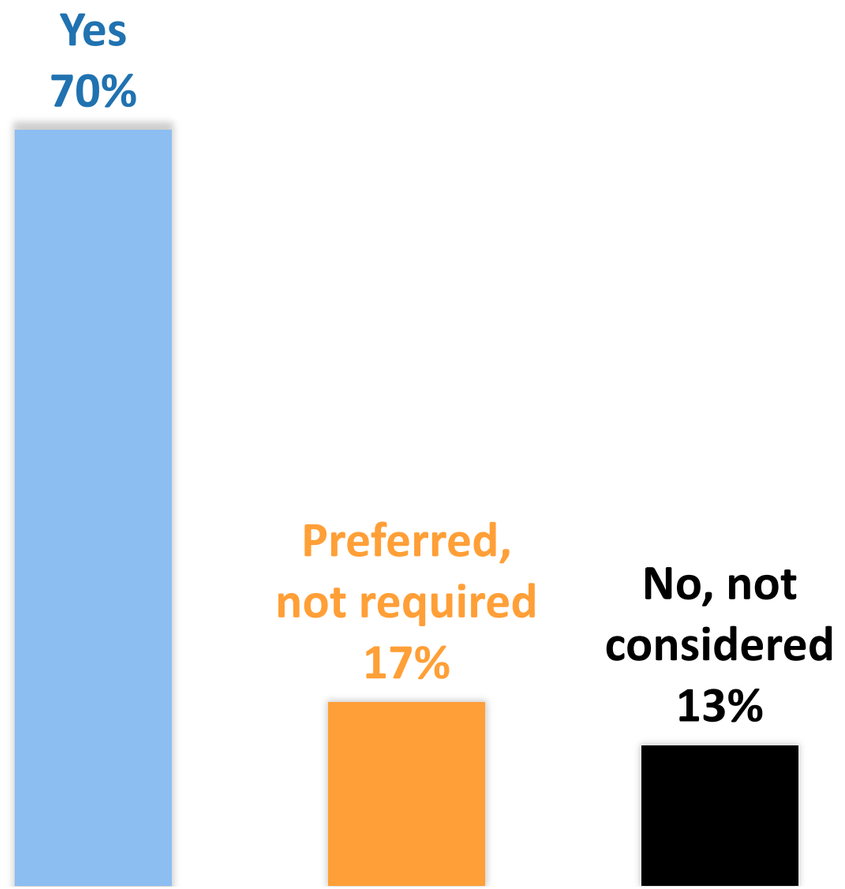


Supplier Audits and Culture

CONDUCT SUPPLIER AUDITS

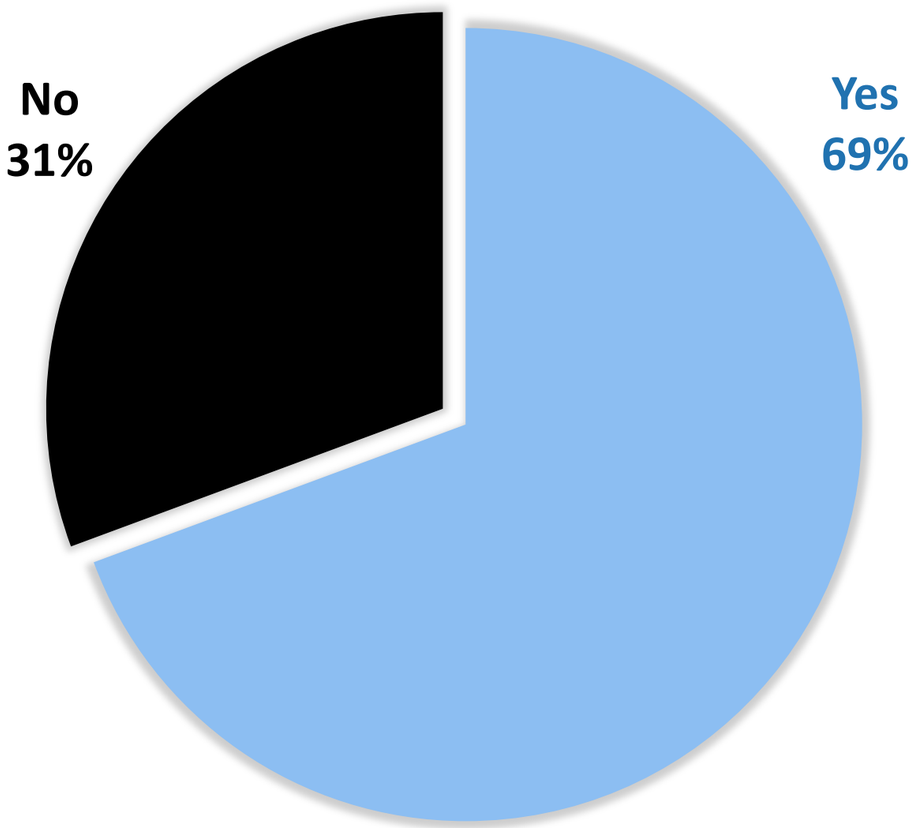


SUPPLIER'S FOOD SAFETY CULTURE AS A BUSINESS DECISION

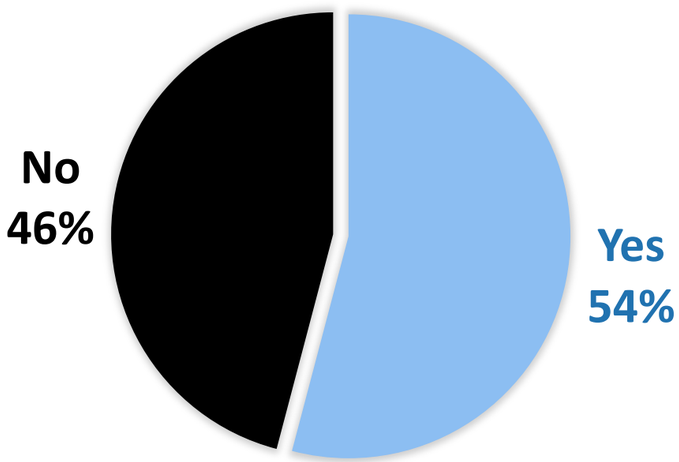


Top-Down Accountability

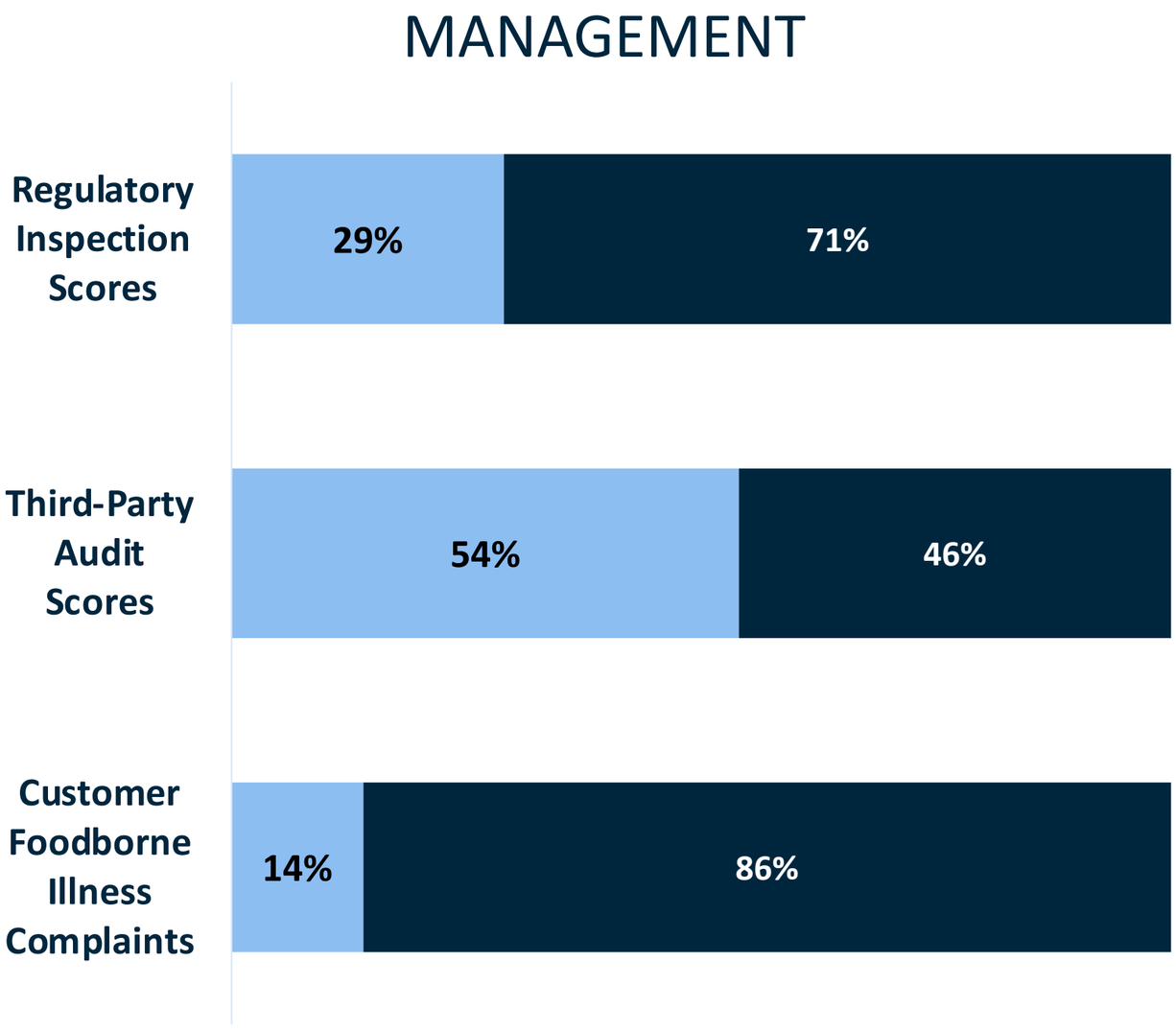
SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY FROM SENIOR LEADERSHIP TO FOOD HANDLERS

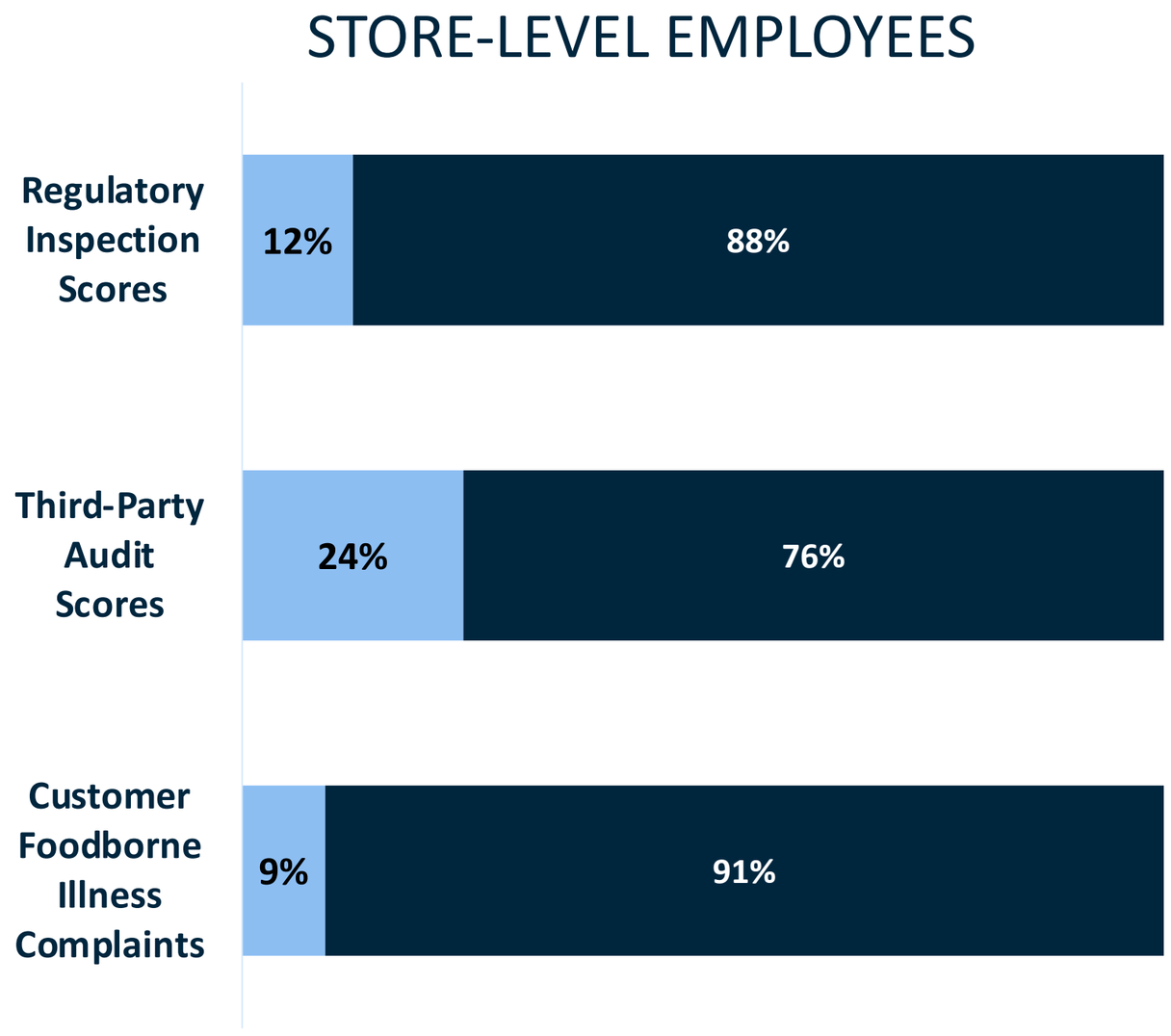


AUDIT RESULTS USED AS C-SUITE AGENDA TOPICS



Performance Bonuses Tied to Food Safety Metrics



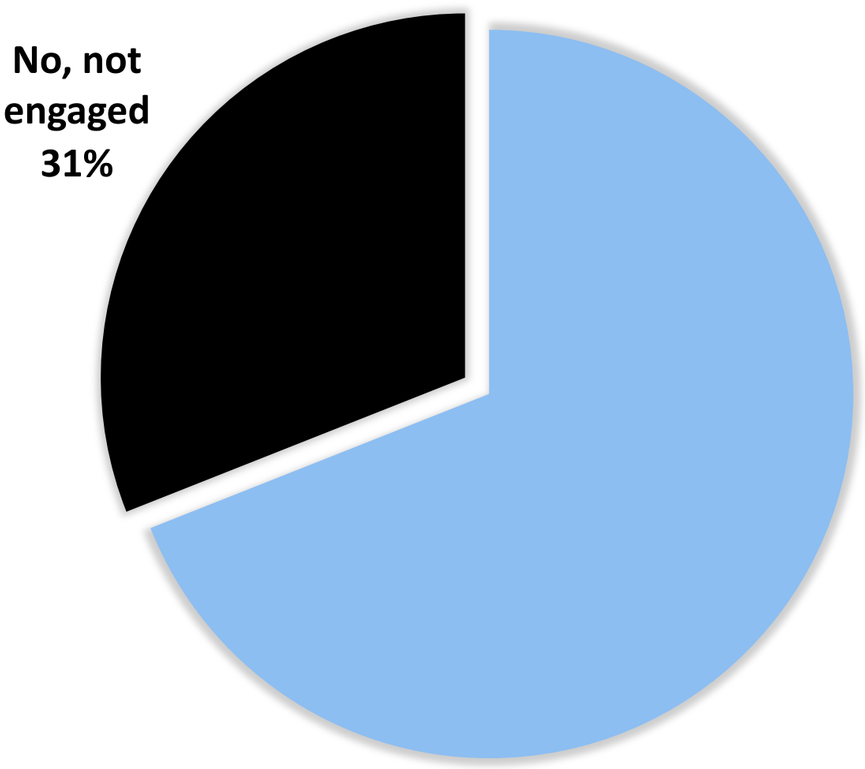


Other Forms of Incentive

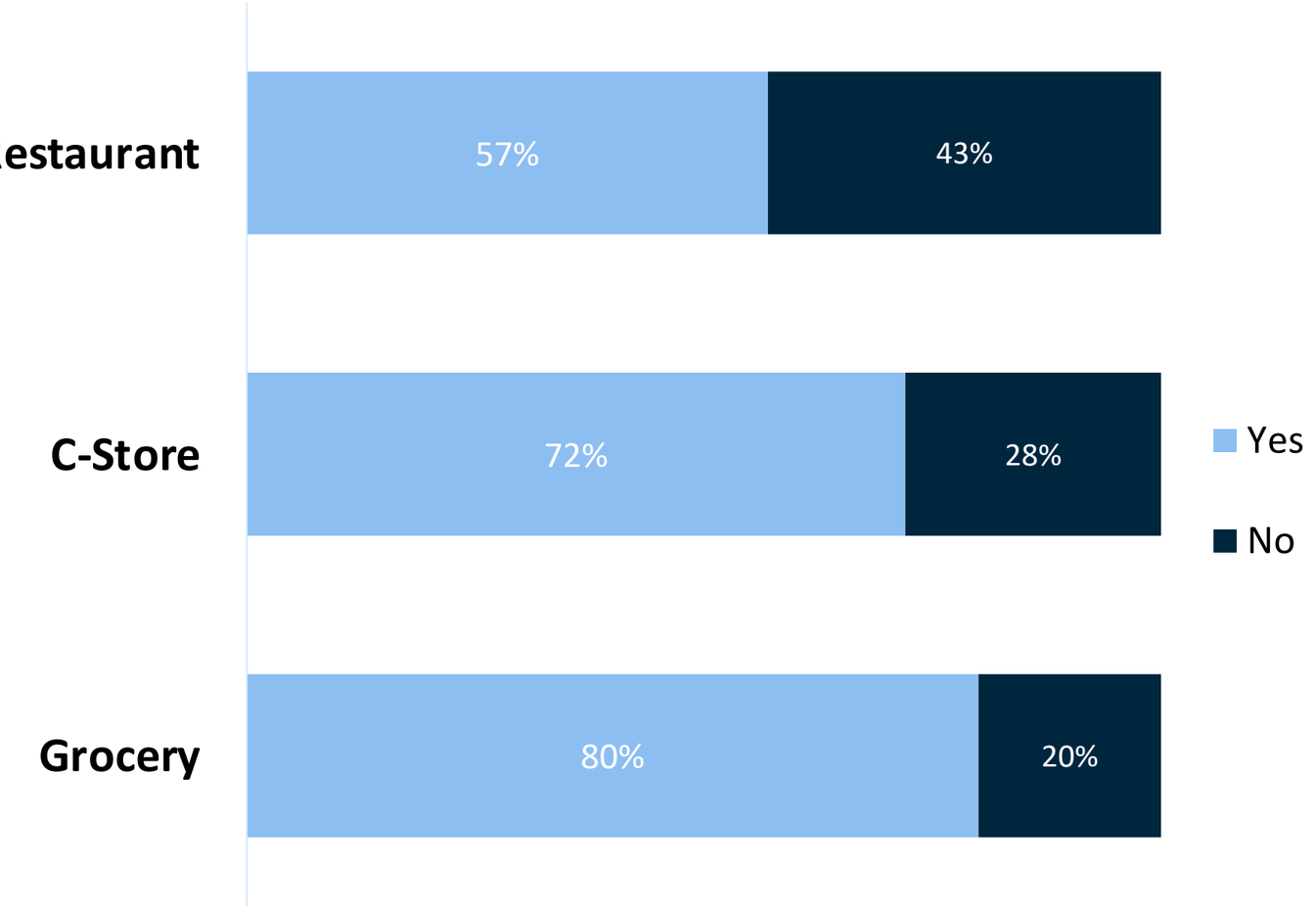
- Pop quizzes
- Spontaneous inquiry into food safety knowledge
- Positive reinforcement
- Food safety-theme contests
- Creative scheduling
- Cash prizes
- Other

Building Relationships with Regulatory Authorities

COMPANY ENGAGED IN RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING EFFORTS WITH THEIR REGULATORY AUTHORITY



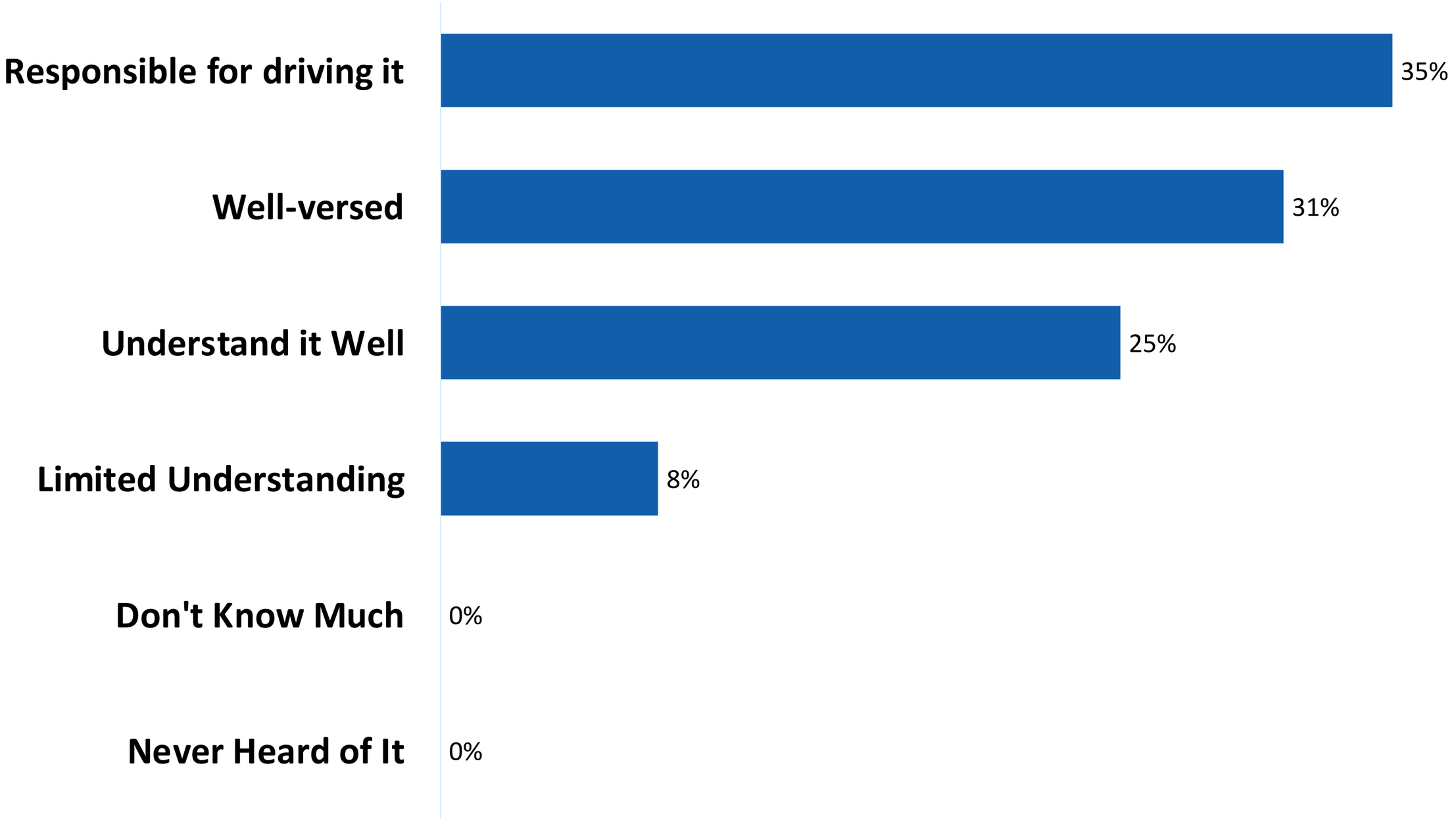
ENGAGEMENT BY INDUSTRY SEGMENT



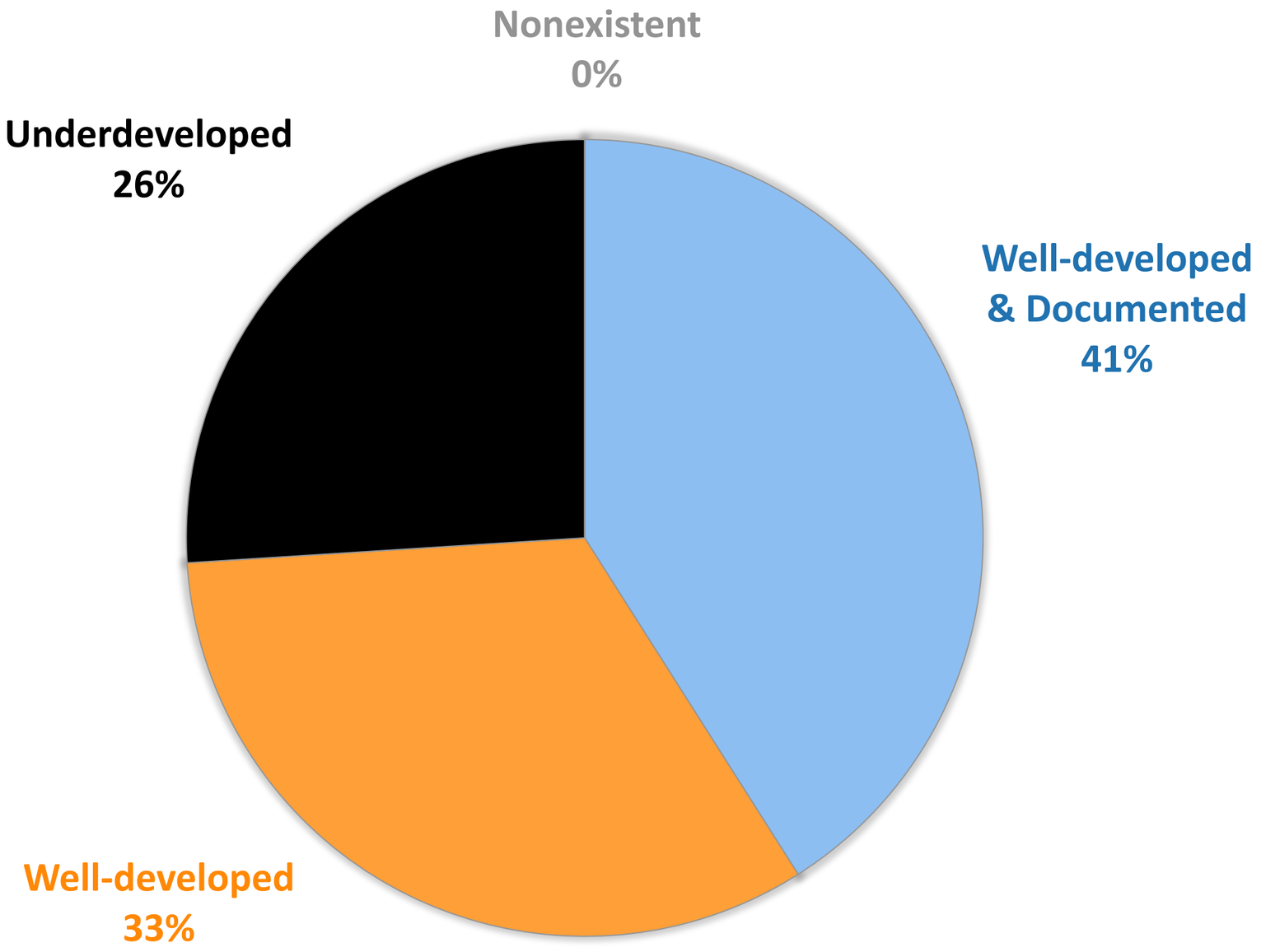
Intentional Relationship-Building & Current State of FSMS

	Current State of FSMS	
Relationship-Building	Underdeveloped	Well-developed
Yes	14%	54%
No	14%	18%

Food Safety Culture: Level of Understanding



Current State of Your Food Safety Management System



Relationship between Food Safety Culture & FSMS

Current State of FSMS

Food Safety Culture	Underdeveloped	Well-developed
Responsible for driving it/ Understand it well	27%	68%
Limited understanding	0%	5%

How is your brand superior to or deficient from the behaviors revealed by your colleagues?

Compared to Your Industry Colleagues

- Food safety is a core principle.
- Supplier food safety culture as a business decision & supplier audits performed.
- Top-down accountability, tied to metrics and routinely shared with senior leadership.
  - Managers lead by example and correct unsafe practices.
  - Ideas to improve are solicited at all levels.
  - Whistle-blower protection.
  - Reward & recognition programs
- Your PICs are CFPMs, present during every shift, who demonstrate knowledge per the Food Code.
- Efforts made to overcome challenges to learner retention like bias in favor of practices learned in the home, peer pressure, or language and cultural barriers.
- Priority and Priority Foundation items are identified in your SOPs.
- Intentional relationship building with regulatory authorities.

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