

## FOOD PROTECTION MANAGEMENT

Food Safety efforts through the FOOD PROTECTION MANAGEMENT program resulted in 35% of District 2 counties providing food safety certification courses for food service providers. Effective March 1, 2003, food establishments were to have a certified food manager on site. Texas Cooperative Extension has collaborated with the Texas Department of Health to provide food protection management certification.



Lamb County food establishments are trained in safe food handling procedures through the Food Manager Certification Training Course.

Statistics indicate that foodborne illness continues to be a health issue in the United States. Each year, 1 in 4 Americans will become sick, 1 in 1,000 will become hospitalized, and 5,000 will die due to a foodborne illness.

During a past legislative session, a statute was amended that allowed the Texas Department of Health (TDH) to require each food establishment to have one certified food manager. Recently, the Texas Board of Health adopted rules to implement this statute.

Eating establishments have already received a letter from the Texas Department of Health regarding this. Under these new rules, each food establishment permitted by the Texas Department of Health must have one certified food manager.

Effective March 1, 2003, Texas food establishments were to have a certified food manager on site. New food manager certificates will be valid for 5 years.

Almost 50 cents of every dollar Americans spend on food is spent on meals prepared away from home. Therefore, careful attention to food safety will help keep customers safe and satisfied. Foodborne illnesses are estimated to cost thousands of dollars in lost wages, insurance, and medical bills. With these statistics, knowledge of how to prevent foodborne illness is essential. The benefits of improved food safety include: Increased customer satisfaction, Improved relationships with health officials, Prevention of bad publicity and law suits due to foodborne illness.

By attending the course, food service managers will learn about: identifying potentially hazardous foods and common errors in food handling, preventing contamination and cross-contamination of food, teaching and encouraging personal hygiene for employees, complying with government regulations, maintaining clean utensils, equipment and surroundings, and controlling pests.