

## Extending Knowledge - Changing Lives

### Statewide Food Safety Programs

#### ISSUE

Foodborne illnesses are a common and costly – yet preventable – public health issue. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately one in six Americans (nearly 48 million people) get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die of foodborne illnesses each year (CDC, 2017). The actual incidences of hospitalization and death are probably higher, but many foodborne illnesses go undiagnosed. The State of Delaware requires a person in charge on each shift at a licensed food service establishment be certified in food safety through an approved food safety course. In addition, individuals who want to produce certain foods from home are required to have an educational course that culminates in a certification exam. Churches and other organizations that prepare food for the public, although not required, realize the importance of providing education for their volunteers on the essentials of food safety.

#### RESPONSE

Servsafe®, Dinesafe, Food Safety for On-Farm Entrepreneurs and Food Safety for Cottage Entrepreneurs classes are offered by University of Delaware Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Science staff. The pertinent class to each participant depends on the certification that is needed by that individual. Ten Servsafe® classes and nine Dinesafe classes were offered statewide. One Food Safety for On-Farm Entrepreneurs training and two Food Safety for Cottage Entrepreneurs trainings were offered.

#### IMPACT

One hundred thirty-five individuals attended Servsafe® classes, taking the certification exam with an additional 30 individuals taking the certification exam only. Eighty-four of those individuals passed the exam, becoming certified and meeting the requirements of the State of Delaware for the person in charge. Twenty-six individuals attended the Entrepreneur classes with all 26 passing the certification exam. In addition, 96 Delawareans attended a Dinesafe training program. Post program surveys from participants who attended Servsafe® and Dinesafe classes showed that those individuals serve approximately 29,000 customers per day. In addition, as a result of participating in a Servsafe® or Dinesafe class individuals responded in the following manner:

- 82% will calibrate thermometers on a regular basis
- 85% will thoroughly wash and sanitize all food surfaces
- 95% will wash hands properly
- 80% will cool foods more rapidly
- 80% will heat hot foods at or above 135° F