

Louisiana Retailers –Specialized Processing Methods eLearning Curriculum

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Louisiana Food Retailers
SPECIALIZED PROCESSING



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Content

- Definitions
- Collaborative Food Safety Education Program for Louisiana Retail/Manufacturing Crossover Businesses Project
- Louisiana crossover businesses characteristics and food safety needs assessment from LDH Sanitarian Perspective
- eLearning curriculum

Crossover Businesses



New trends are driving businesses to cross over from retail to manufacturing, blurring the lines between industries.



Spanning across both retail and manufacturing enables limitless potential and growth of food businesses, but also makes it difficult for the local regulatory agencies as well as crossover business owners to navigate the complex food regulations.



Specialized Processing



Regulatory authorities recognize variance to food establishment that utilize Specialized Processing Methods such as Smoking Food for Preservation, curing food, etc.

Why Variance Requirement?

- FDA has identified specific processes that historically resulted in more foodborne illness.
- These processes present a significant risk if not conducted under strict operational procedures.
- These processes require specialized equipment and personnel that demonstrate specific competencies.
- The main purpose of the variance requirement is to ensure food safety.

Variance Requirement

- In Louisiana variance requirement and specialized processing methods are govern under the Louisiana Administrative Code Title 51 (LAC 51).
- Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is the responsible agency to enforce specialized processing methods and variance requirements in our state.

Variance Requirement (FDA Food Code 2022)

- A food establishment shall obtain a variance from the regulatory authority before:
 - Smoking food as method of preservation
 - Curing food
 - Using food additives such as vinegar
 - As method of preservation
 - To render a food so that is not time/temperature control of safety food.
 - Packing time/temperature control for safety food using Reduce Oxygen Packaging (ROP).



Variance Requirement (FDA Food Code 2022) cont....

- A food establishment shall obtain a variance from the regulatory authority before:
 - Operating a molluscan shellfish life-support system display tank used to store or display shellfish that are offered for human consumption.
 - Custom processing animals that are for personal use as food and not for sale or service in a food establishment.
 - Preparing food by another method that is determined by the regulatory authority to require a variance, or
 - Sprouting seeds or beans.



USDA-NIFA FSOP funded project (2019-2024)

**“Collaborative Food Safety Education Program for
Louisiana Retail/Manufacturing Crossover
Businesses”**

A collaboration between LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Department of Health (Field Operations) and Louisiana Retail Industry



Objectives of the Grant

1

Identify the needs for regulatory and crossover food businesses in food safety regulation training.

2

Organize and evaluate the existing training materials and identify the gaps.

3

Develop eLearning and train-the-trainer curriculums.

Original Article

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Crossover Food Businesses in Louisiana, United States: A Descriptive Study of Their Characteristics and Food Safety Training Needs From Public Health Inspectors' Perspective

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Integrating retail and manufacturing enables limitless potential for food businesses, but also creates challenges for navigating within complex food safety regulations. From public health inspectors' (PHIs) perspective, **this study aimed (1) to describe the characteristics of crossover businesses in Louisiana, and (2) to evaluate regulation awareness and food safety education needs for business owners and PHIs who inspect crossover businesses.**

Characteristics and Food Safety Needs Assessment (2020) -Method

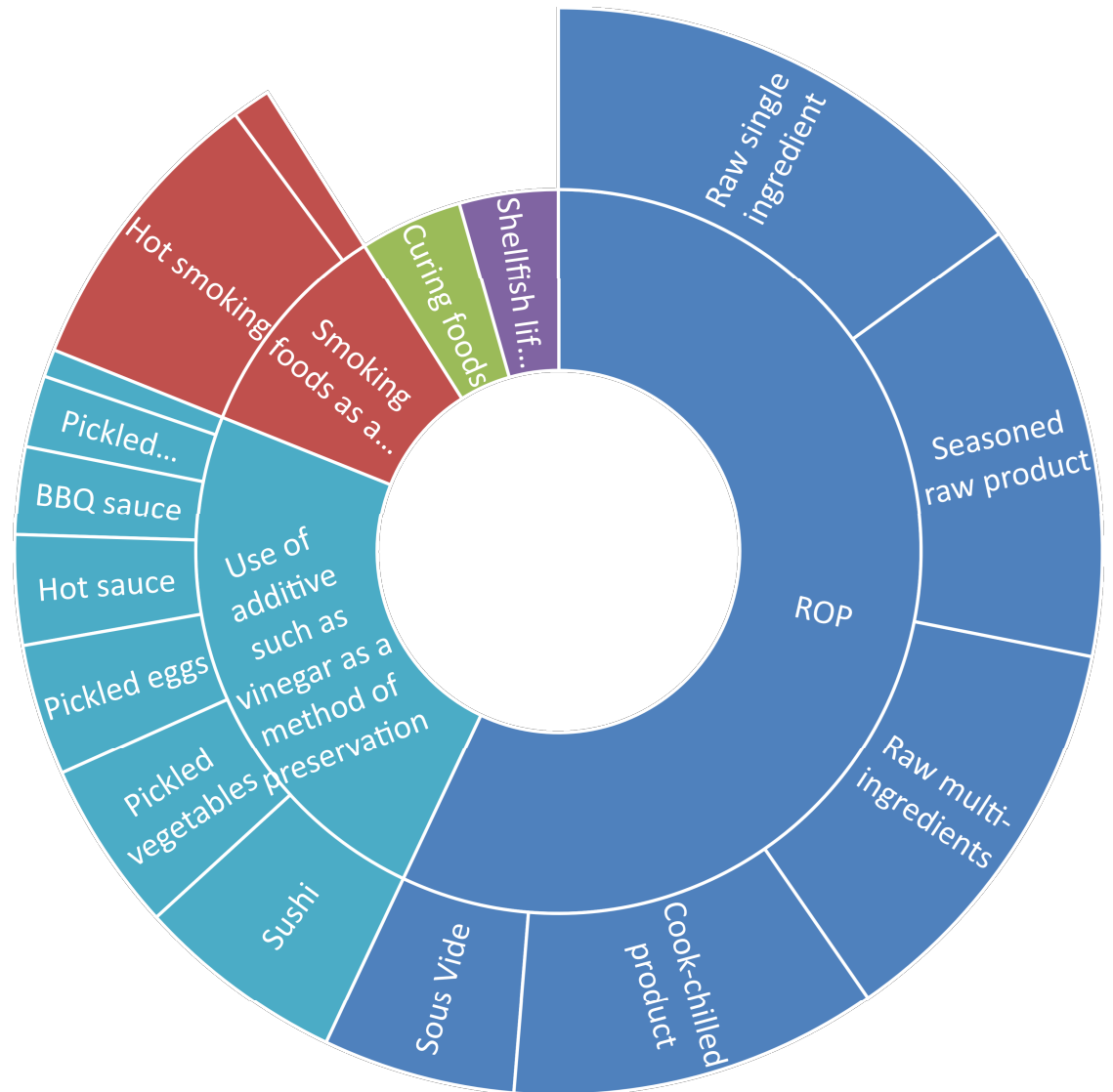
- A self-administered questionnaire was administered to Louisiana Department of Health PHIs using Qualtrics®. A descriptive analysis was performed, focusing on the frequency of each item.

Characteristics and Food Safety Needs Assessment (2020) -Findings

- Responses by LDH Sanitarians (n=171) identified
 - 1,774 retailers were conducting or planned to conduct specialized processes
 - 552 food manufacturers were performing or planned to perform retail functions

Characteristics and Food Safety Needs Assessment (2020) -Findings

Reduced oxygen packaging (ROP, 62%), the use of additives such as vinegar as a method of preservation (36%), and smoking food as a method of preservation (35%) were identified as the most common specialized processing methods in LA.



Characteristics and Food Safety Needs Assessment (2020) -Findings

- Sanitarians perceived crossover businesses as “not aware” or “somewhat aware” of the food safety regulations.
- The current food safety training level for these businesses was reported to range from “no training” to “some training but not sufficient.”

Characteristics and Food Safety Needs Assessment (2020) -Findings

- When asked for a self-assessment, the majority of Sanitarians reported themselves as being “familiar” with the variance requirement for specialized processing.
- Their confidence in inspecting crossover businesses, however, leaned towards “not confident” or “somewhat confident.”

Characteristics and Food Safety Needs Assessment (2020) -Conclusion

- To better guard public health, food safety training is needed for crossover food business owners, as well as public health inspectors on regulations and conducting or inspecting specialized processes.



Louisiana Food Retailers SPECIALIZED PROCESSING

Louisiana Retailers –Specialized Processing Methods eLearning
Curriculum



Louisiana Food Retailers
SPECIALIZED PROCESSING

Curriculum content

- Introduction module
- 1. Where do I Fit?
- 2. Food Safety Definitions
- 3. Food Safety Hazards
- 4. Good Practices at Retail Food Establishments
- 5. Introduction to Specialized Processing Methods
- 6. Seven Principles of HACCP
- 7. Reduce Oxygen Packaging HACCP
- 8. Smoked Meats
- 9. Sushi
- 10. Curriculum evaluation

Modules Structure

- Modules are self-guided and independent of each other
- Knowledge pre-assessment
- Introduction to the topic
- Presentation Recording, videos, presentation file, and/or templates word files
- Knowledge post-assessment (need 80% or more correct answers to pass each module)

Curriculum completion

- Electronic certificate are email after completing curriculum
- Public health inspectors are required to complete all 9 modules to receive certificate
- Retailers must complete modules 1 through 5, and the modules related to the specialized processing methods they engaged in their business
- Certificate includes the list of modules completed.

eLearning Curriculum PILOT

- Pilot was completed by public health inspectors (LDH)
 - Enrolled -137
 - Completed -104
 - Feedback -48
- Pilot was completed between **June 5** through **July 16**

Next Steps

- Collect comments from PILOT and address changes
- Develop train-the-trainer (TTT) curriculum
- Complete in person train-the-trainer (TTT) to public health inspectors
- Launch eLearning curriculum to the industry
- Assess impact of the curriculum
- Project report to sponsor agency
- Maintain/update curriculum

Questions?

