



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

AFDOSS 2023 Annual Conference  
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Advisory Partner, Active Food Safety, LLC

# 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



## **Current States of Food Safety Culture and Food Safety Management Systems in Food Establishments**

*In what ways is your brand either superior to or deficient from the*

## **Management Systems in Food Establishments**

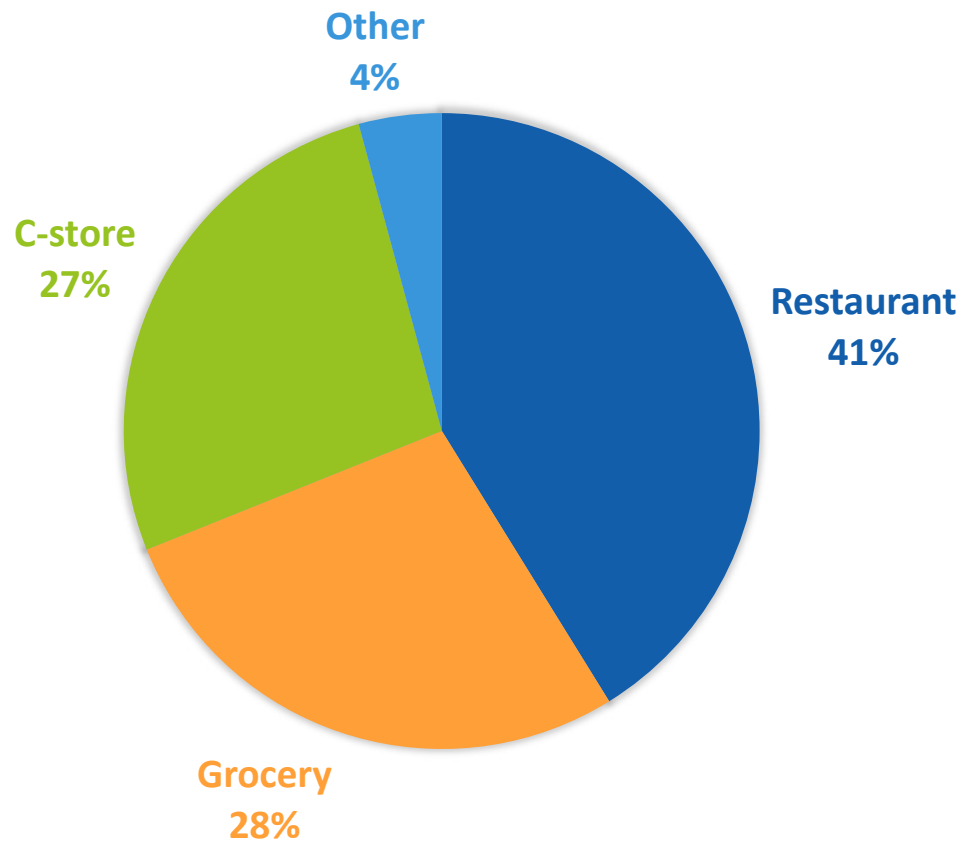
*In what ways is your brand either superior to or deficient from the behaviors revealed by your colleagues?*

*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*

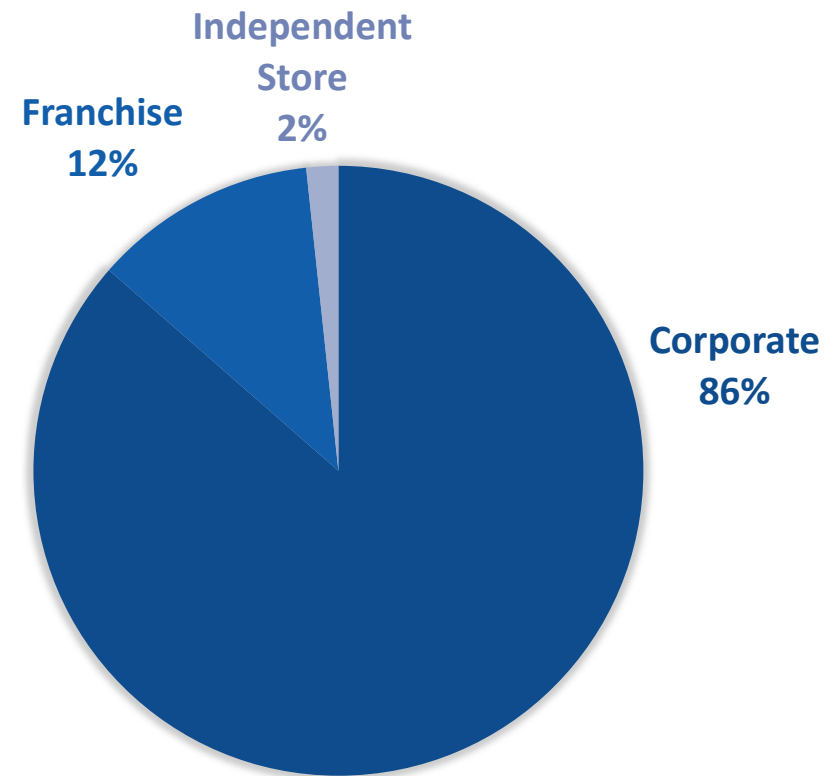
<https://digitaledition.food-safety.com/april-may-2023/feature-cover-story/>

# Survey Demographics

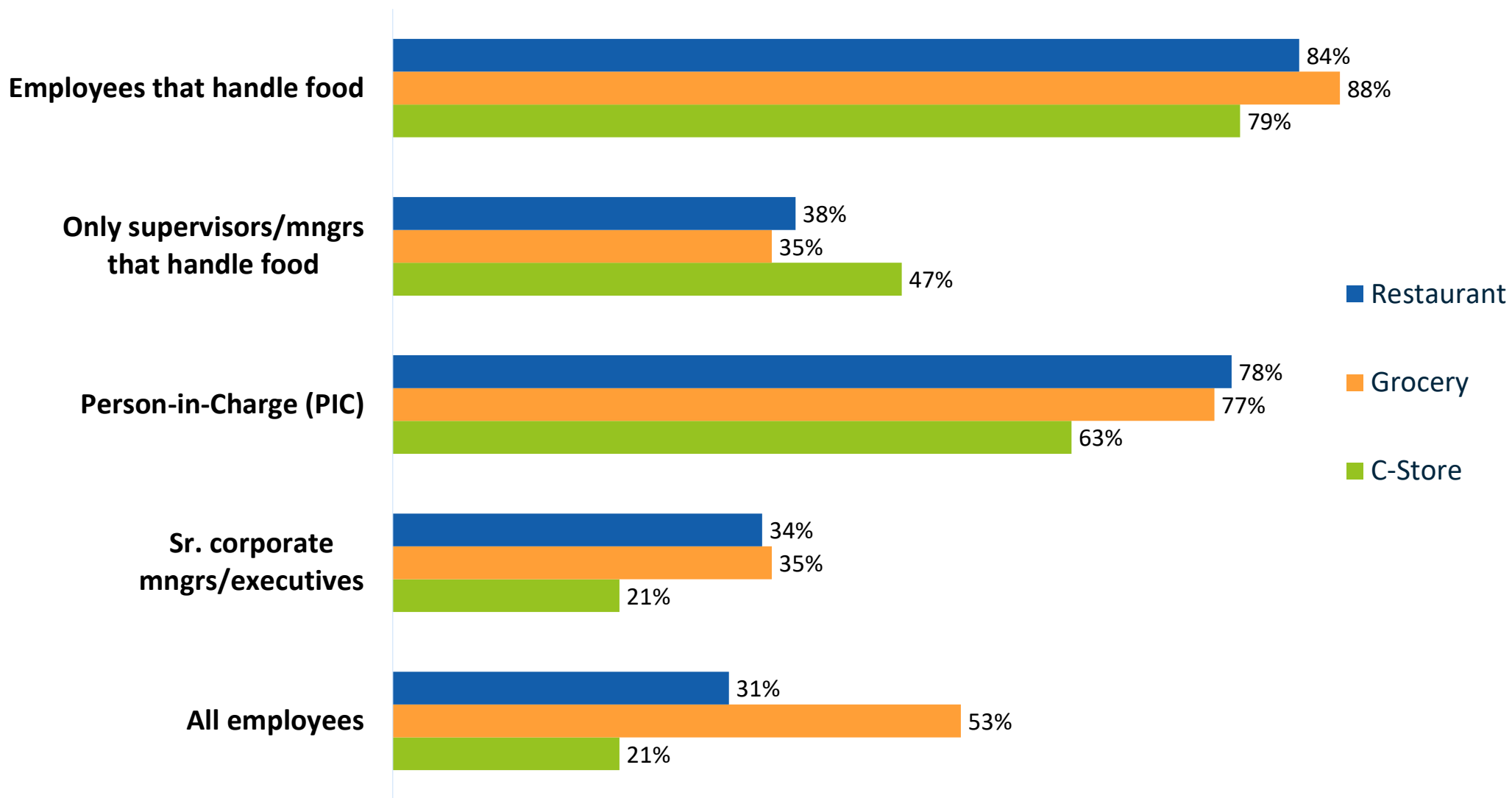
BUSINESS TYPE



OWNERSHIP TYPE

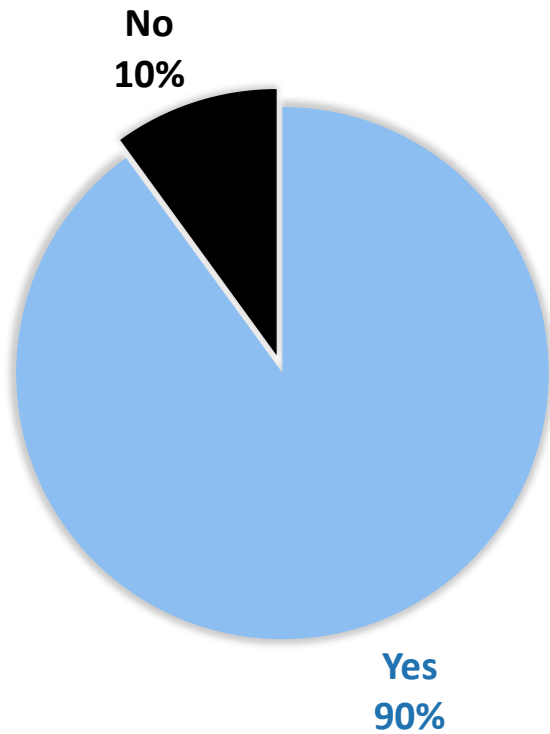


# Personnel Receiving Food Safety Training by Industry Segment

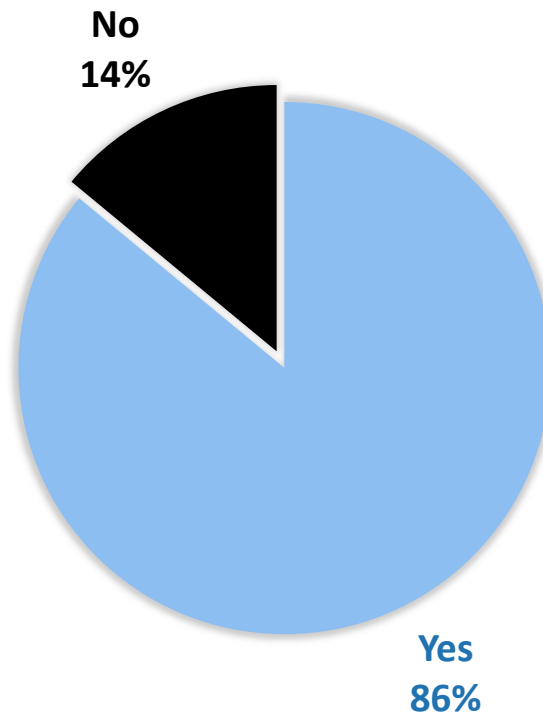


# Other things Going Well

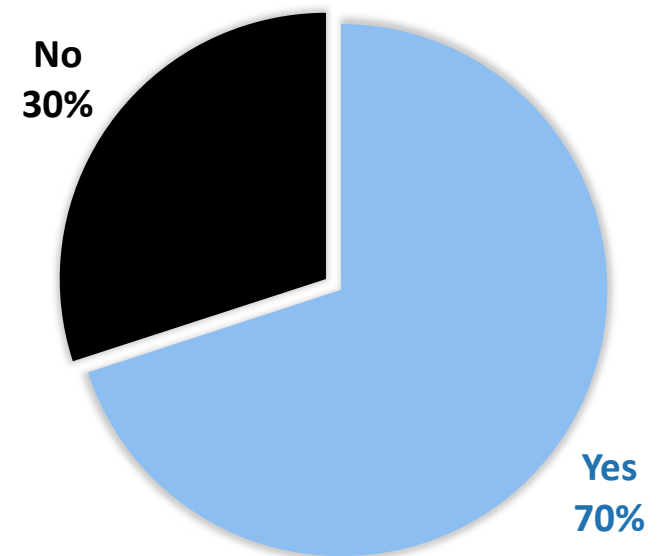
PREREQUISITE PROGRAMS



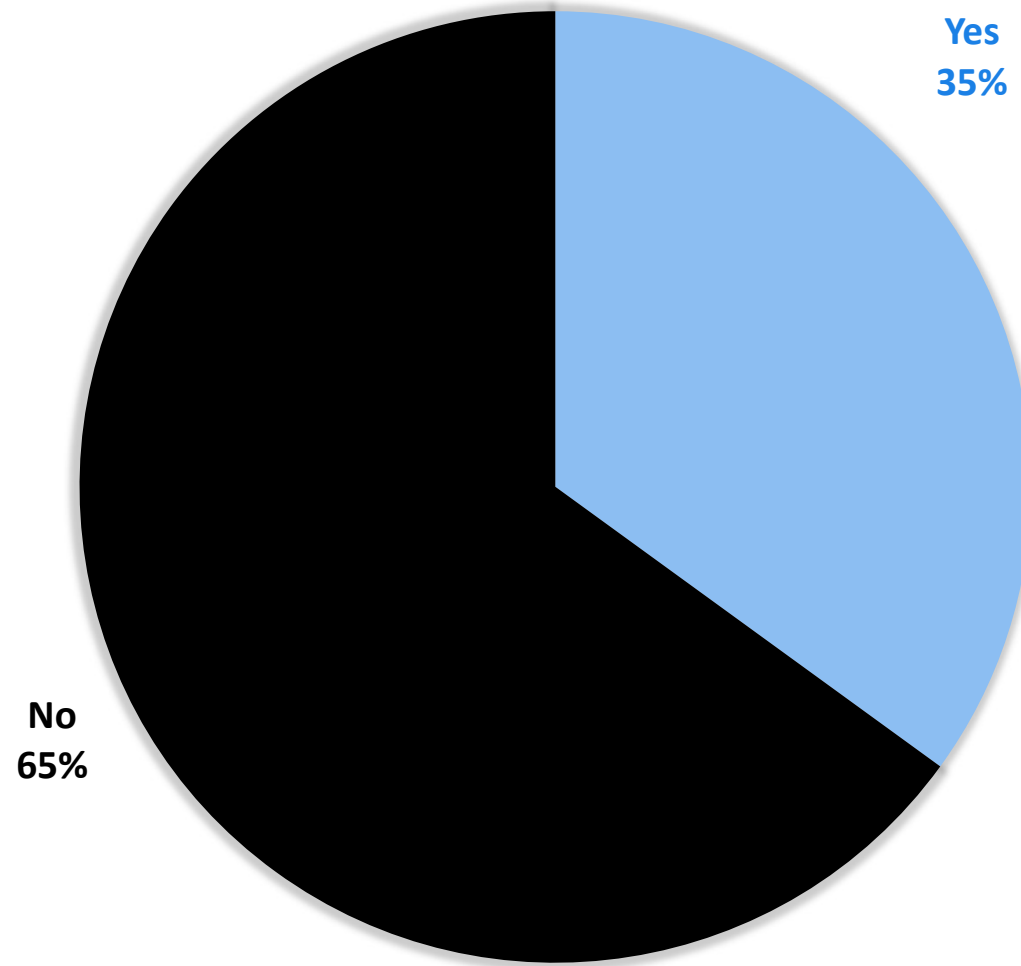
MONITORING & DOCUMENTATION



PROCESS HACCP

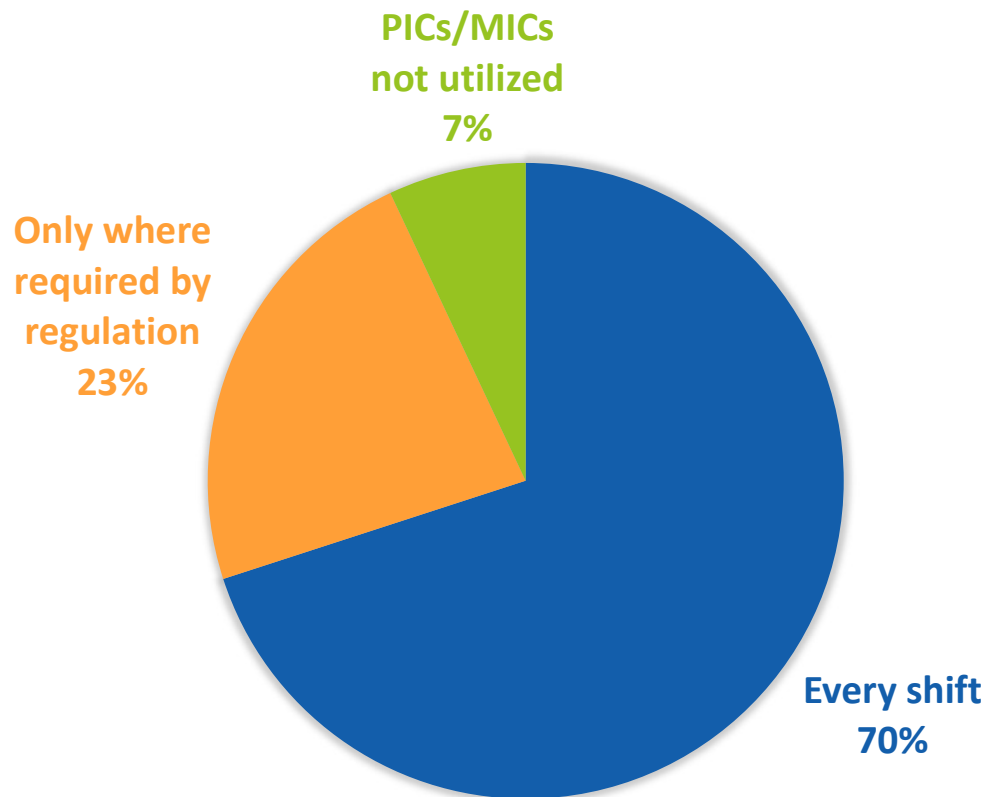


# Use of FDA Training Resources

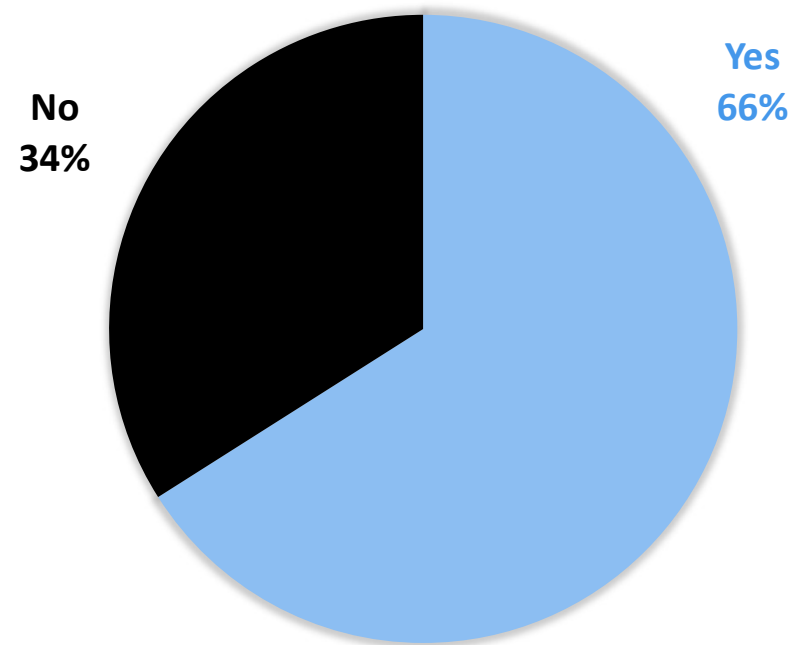


# Management Presence & Certification

PIC/MIC PRESENT FOR EVERY SHIFT

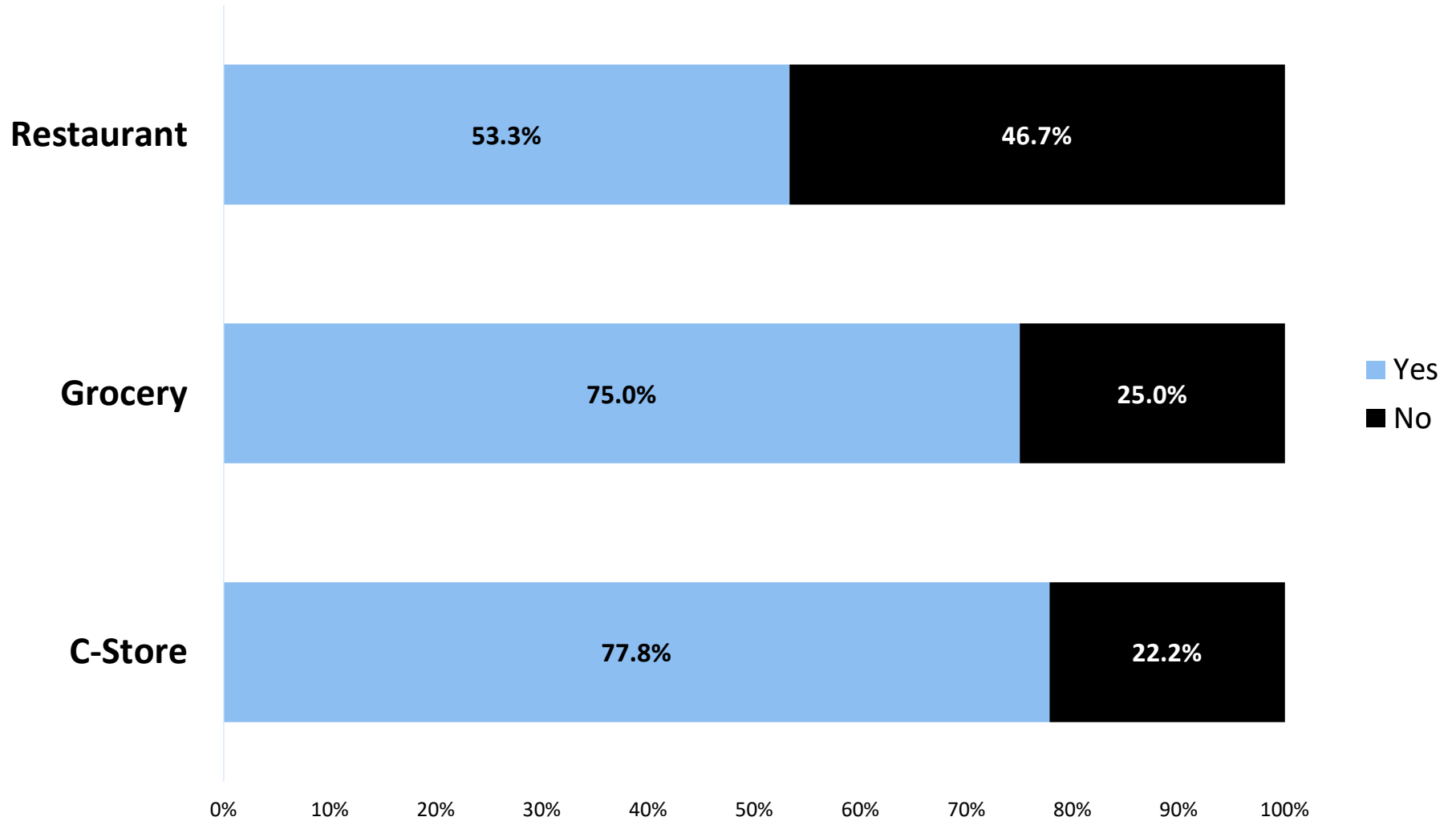


EVERY PIC/MIC IS A CFPM



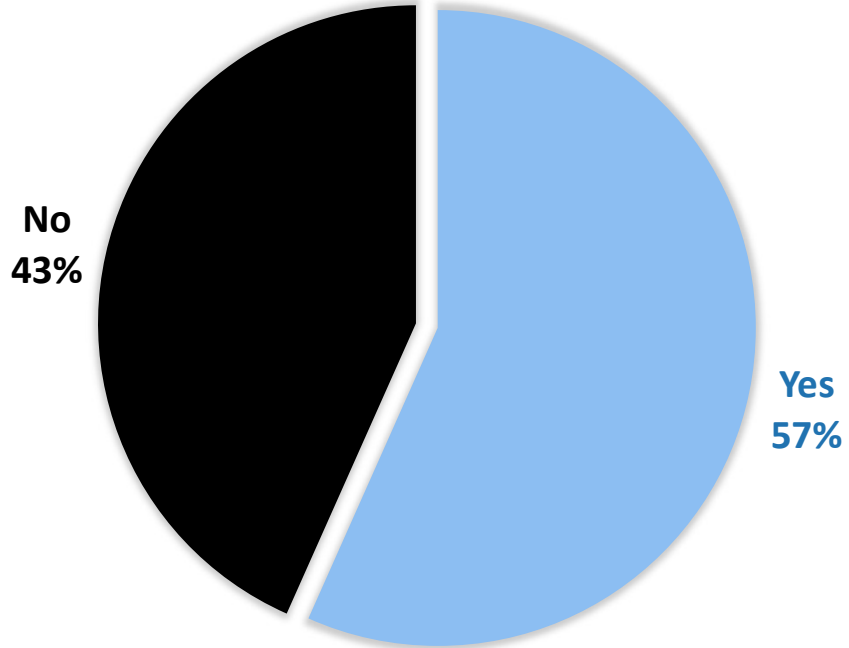


# PIC is a CFPM by Industry Segment

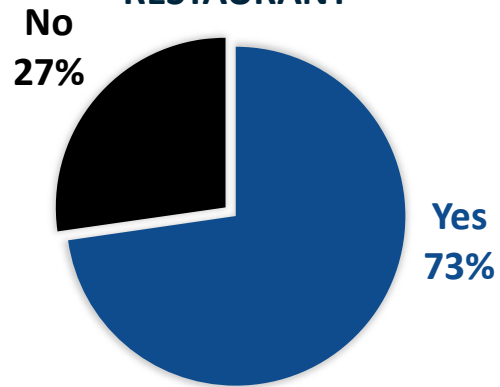


# Conduct Supplier Audits

ALL RESPONSES



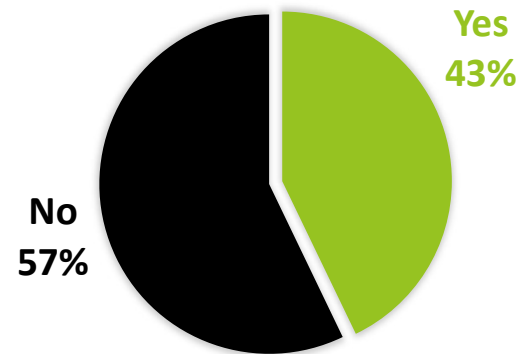
RESTAURANT



GROCERY

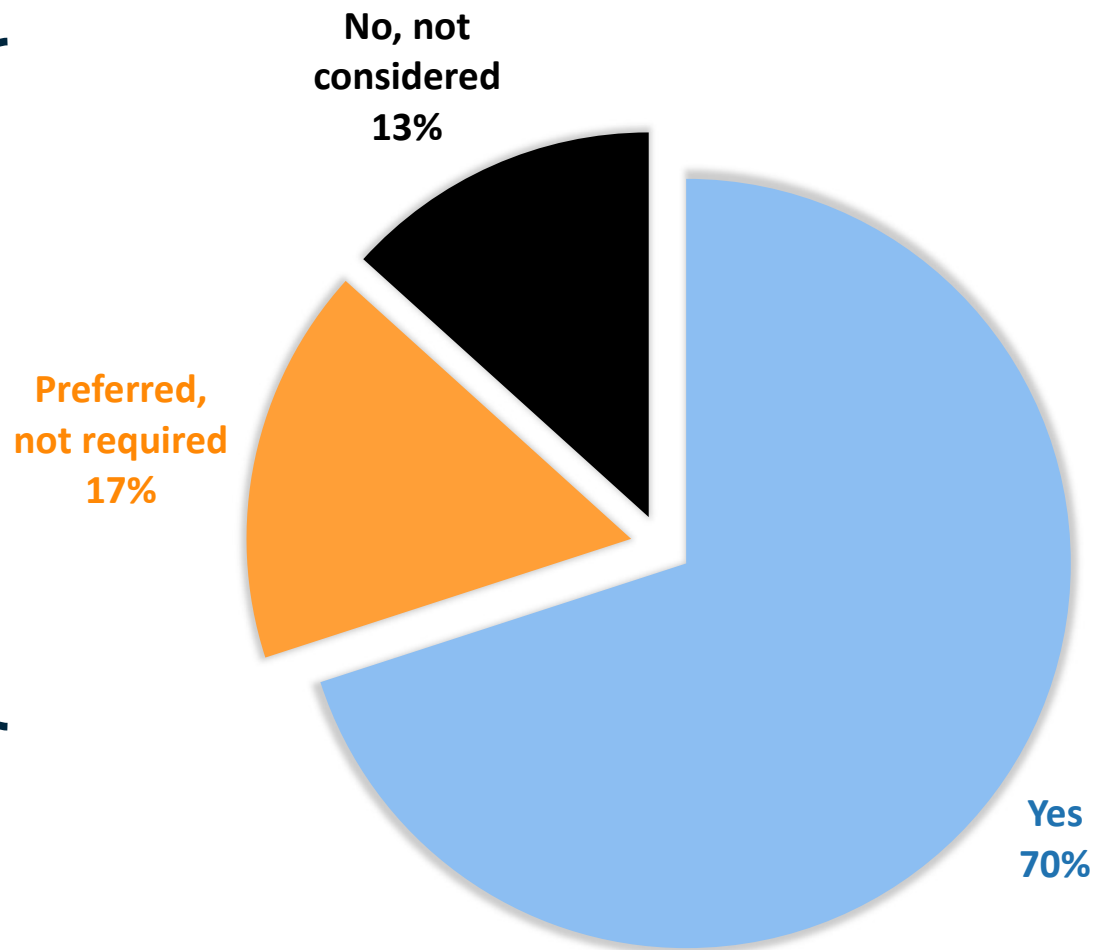


C-STORE



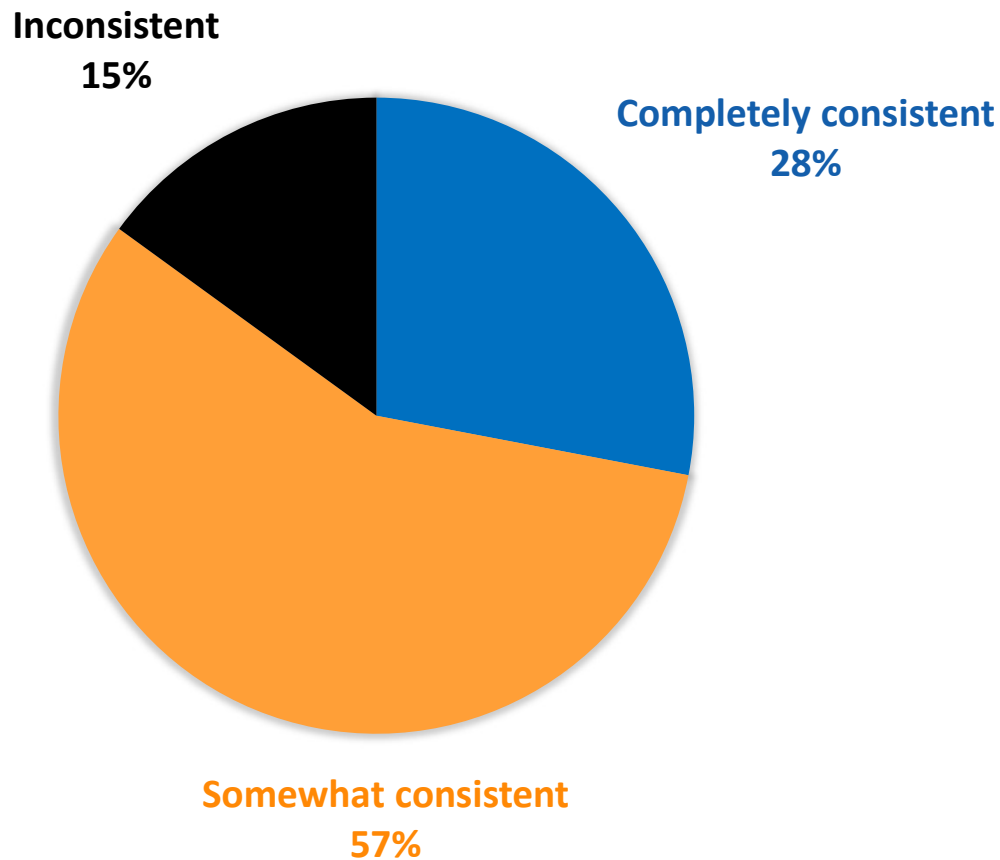
# Supplier's Food Safety Culture as a Business Decision

This 30%  
Represents  
101,100 units

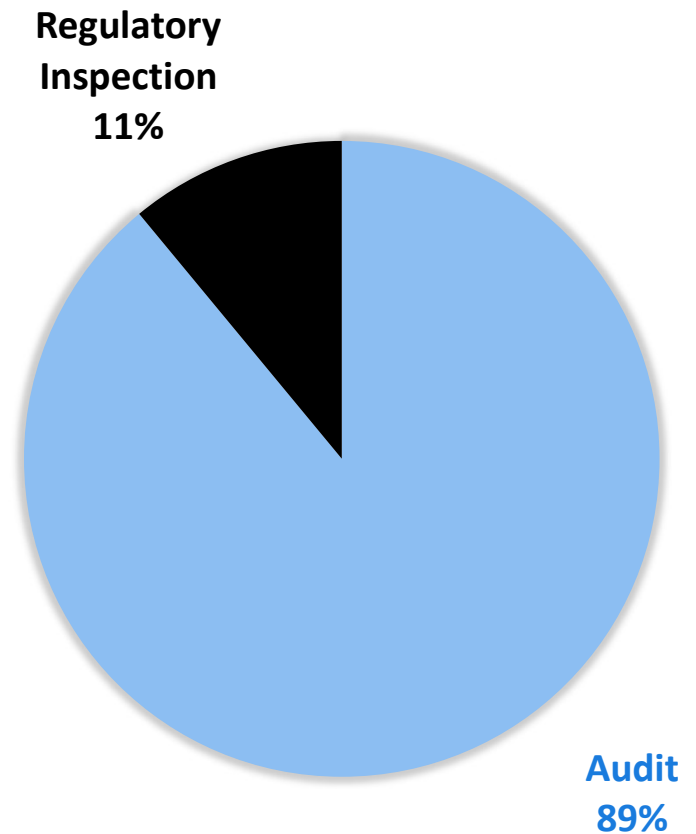


# Audit & Regulatory Inspection Consistency

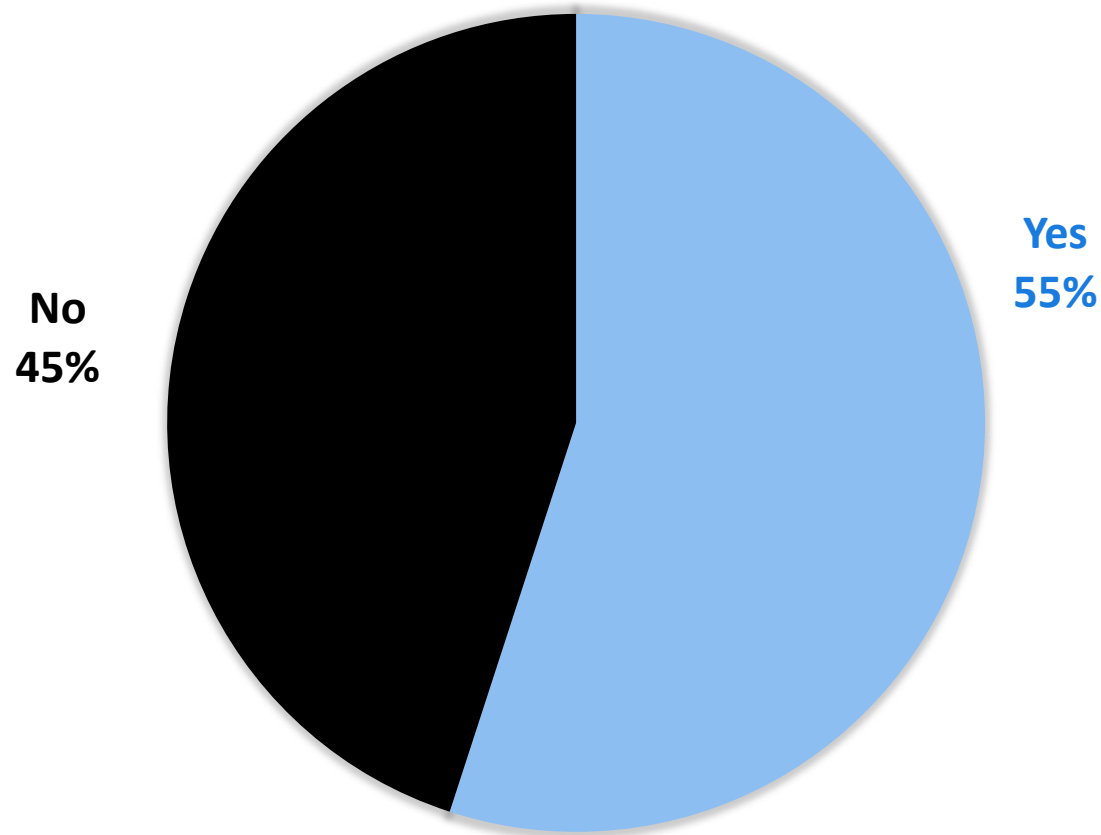
## DEGREE OF CONSISTENCY



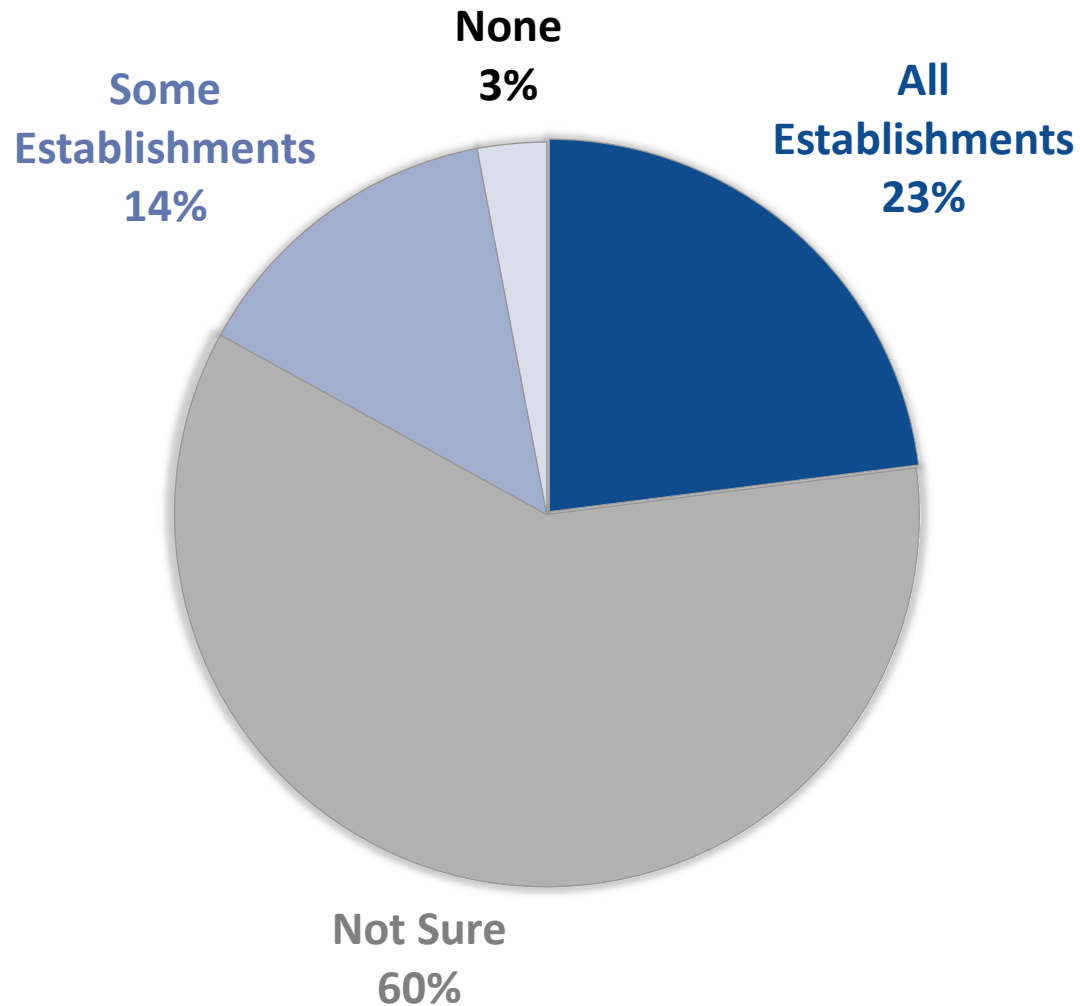
## WHERE INCONSISTENT, WHICH IS BETTER AT IDENTIFYING RISK FACTORS



# Develop FSMS with Regulatory Help



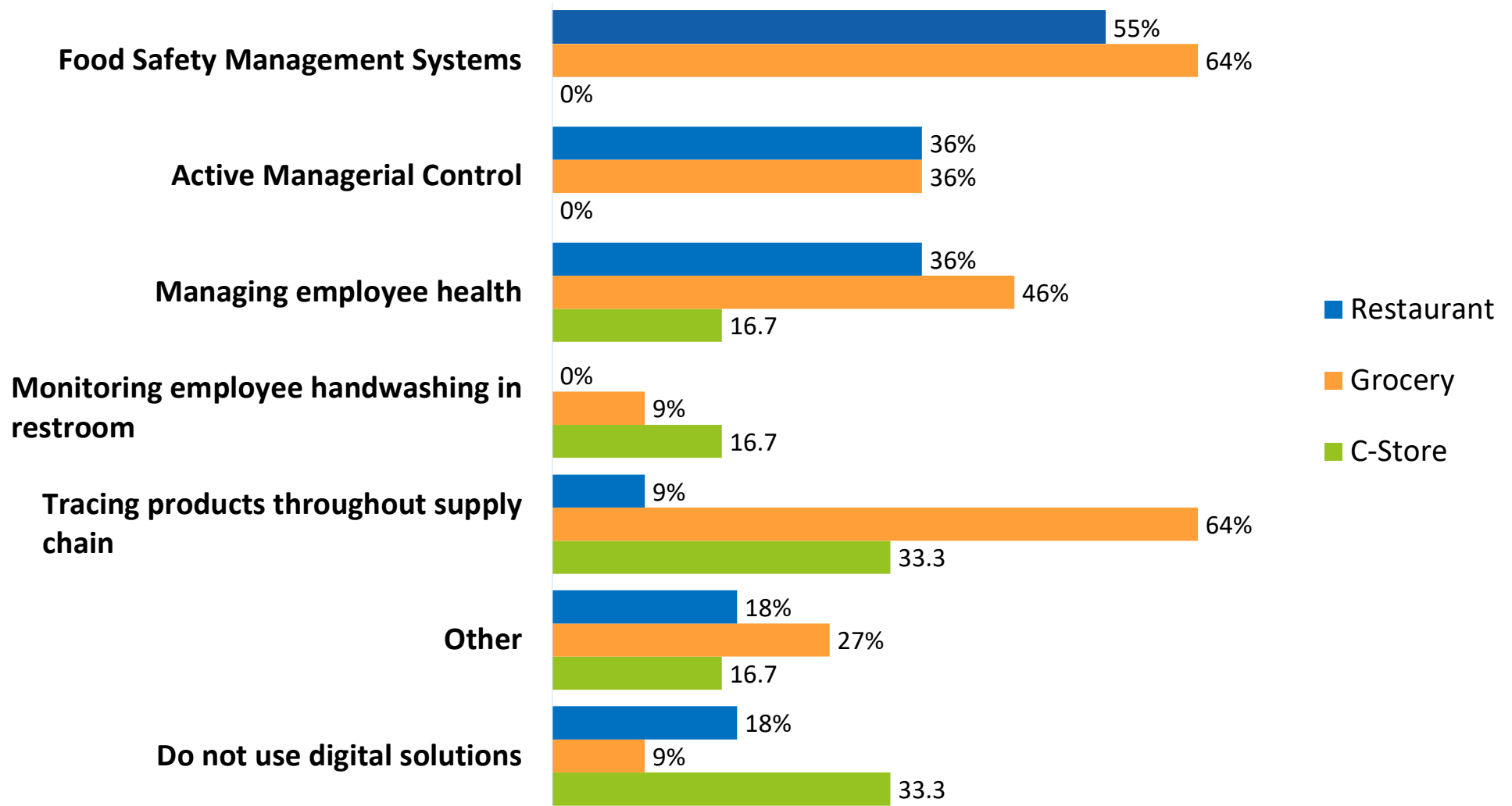
# Percent of Food Establishments Assessed by Regulatory Authority for AMC



# Examples of Public Health Interventions

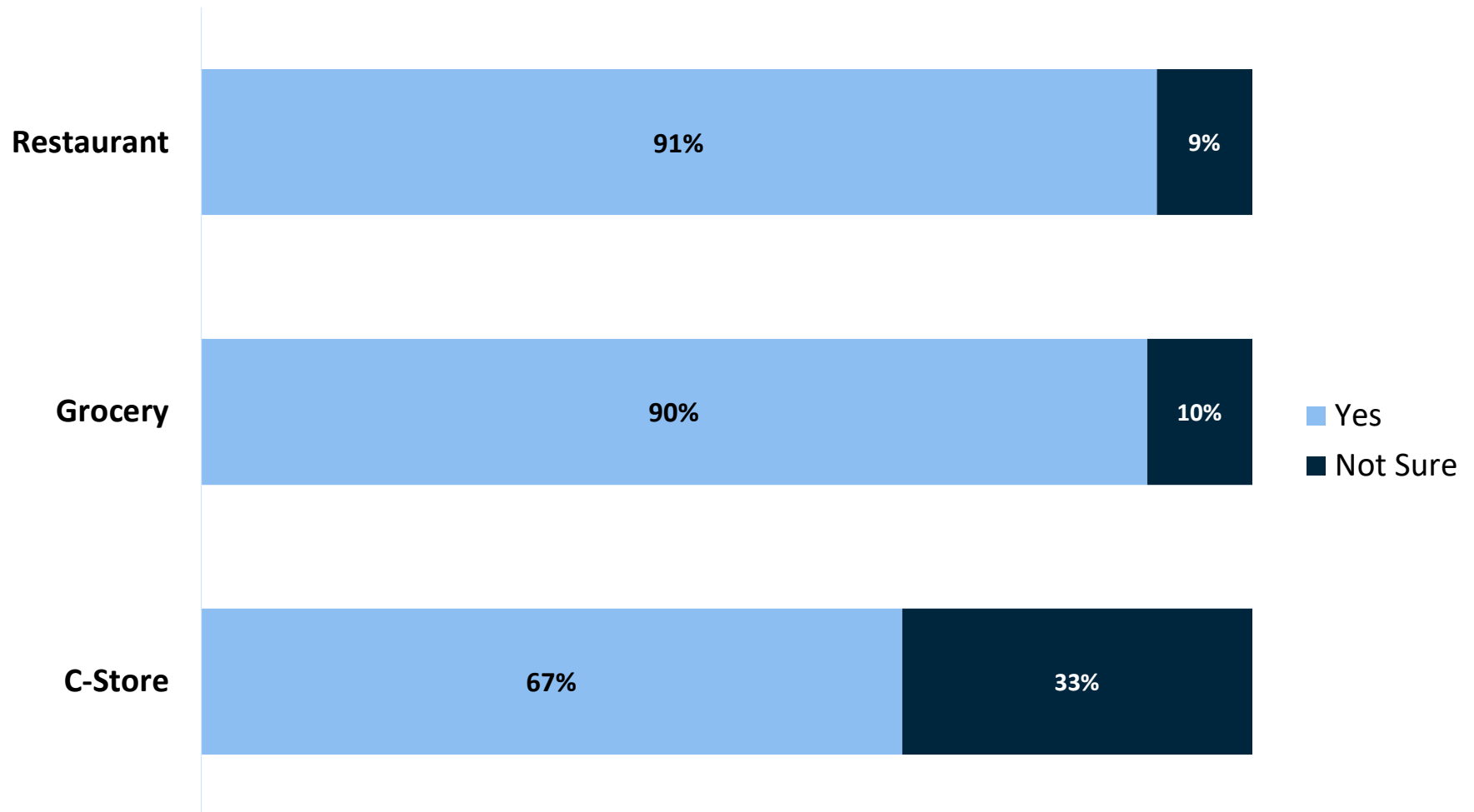
- **Demonstration of knowledge:** Set goals and provide bonuses, require certification, perform training evaluation/knowledge checks
- **Employee health controls:** Provide training and orientation, have health policy in place, do daily health screens, use employee health reporting agreement, manager 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

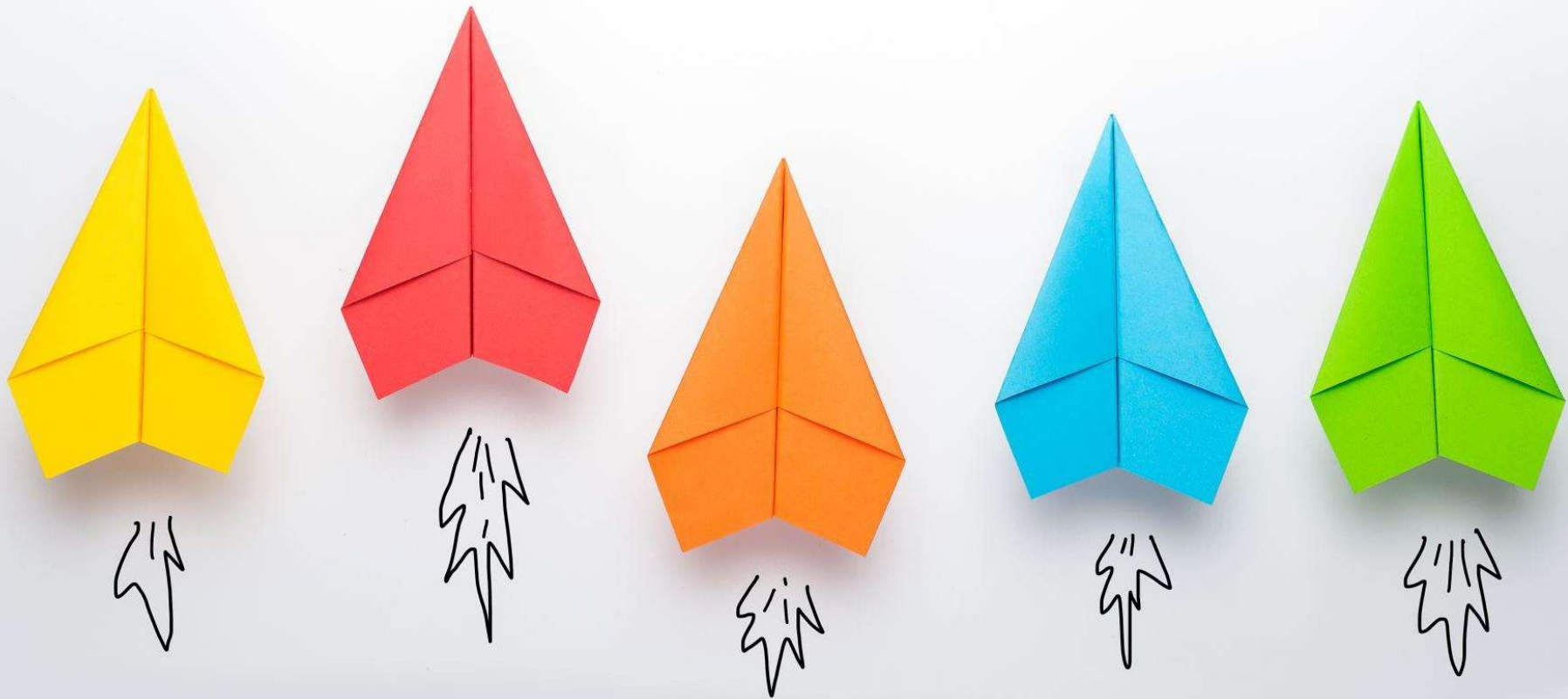
# Use of Digital Solutions to Facilitate Food Safety





# Universally Adopted Food Code is Beneficial



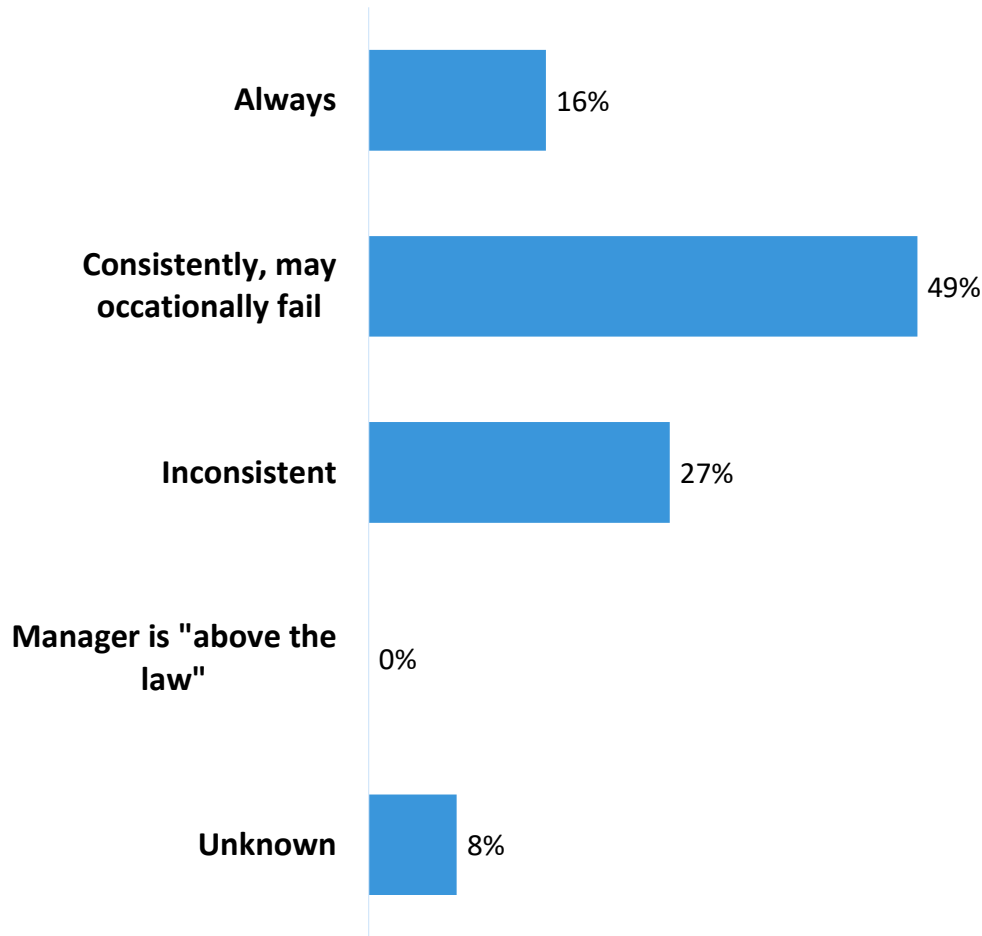


# Five Opportunities

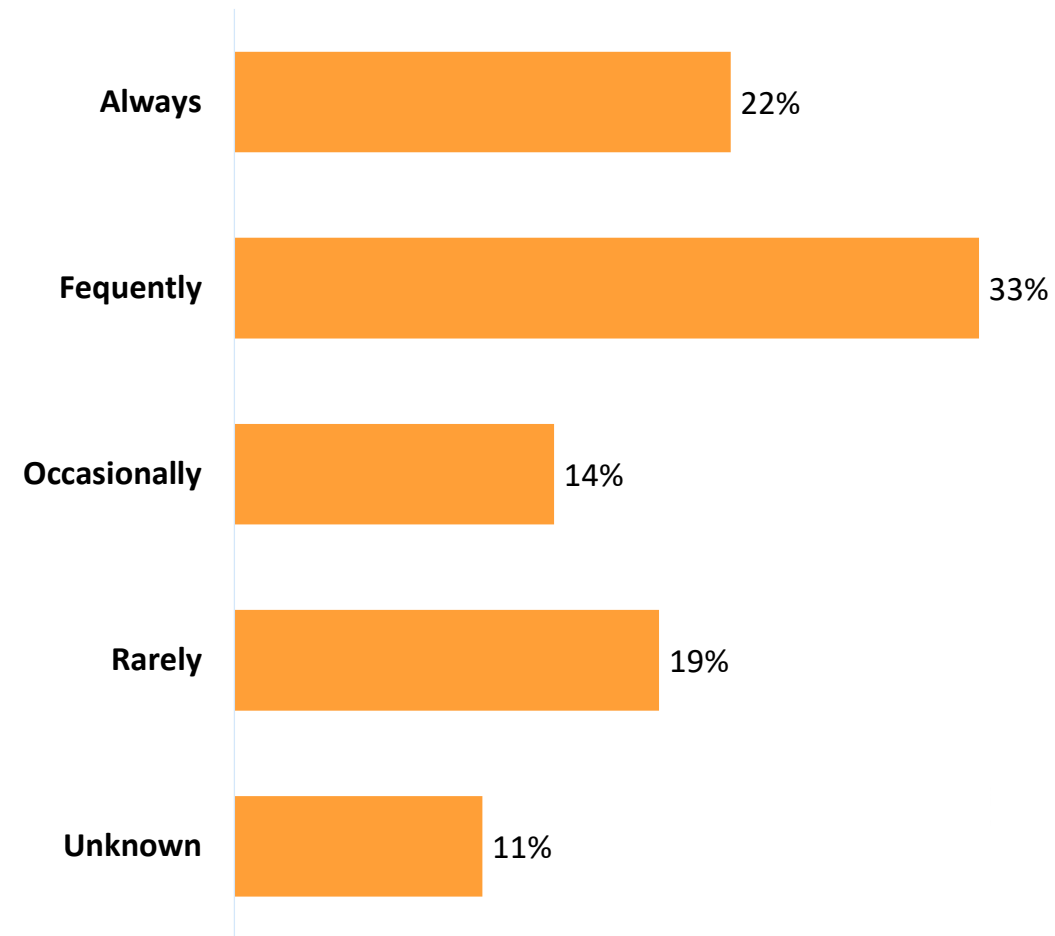
*to immediately improve a brand's food safety culture and FSMS*

# Improve Management Practices

## MANAGEMENT LEADS BY EXAMPLE

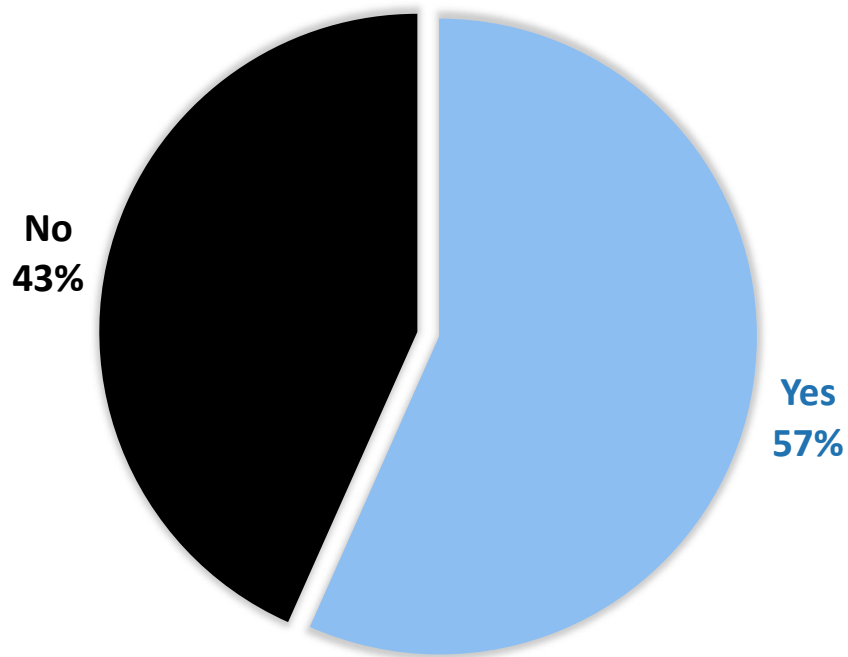


## MANAGEMENT COACHES TO CORRECT UNSAFE PRACTICES

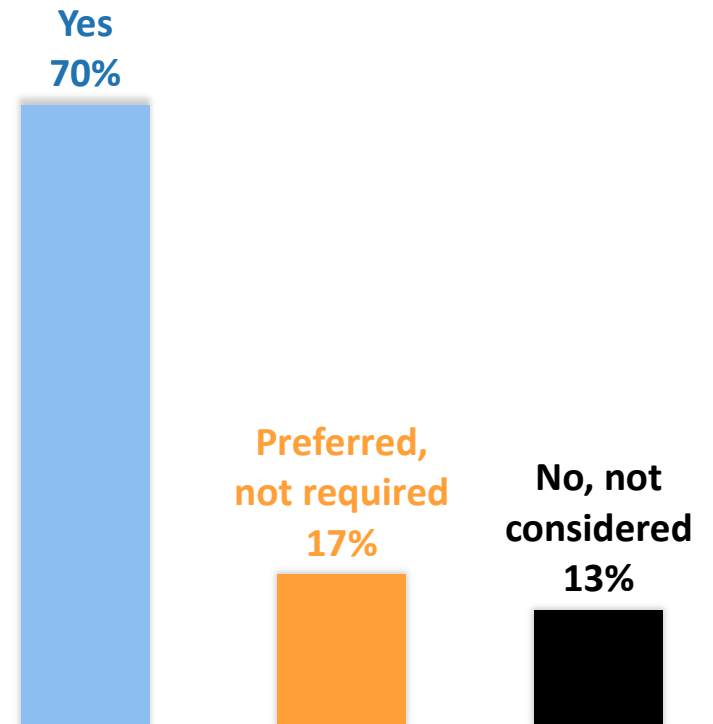


# Supplier Audits and Culture

## CONDUCT SUPPLIER AUDITS

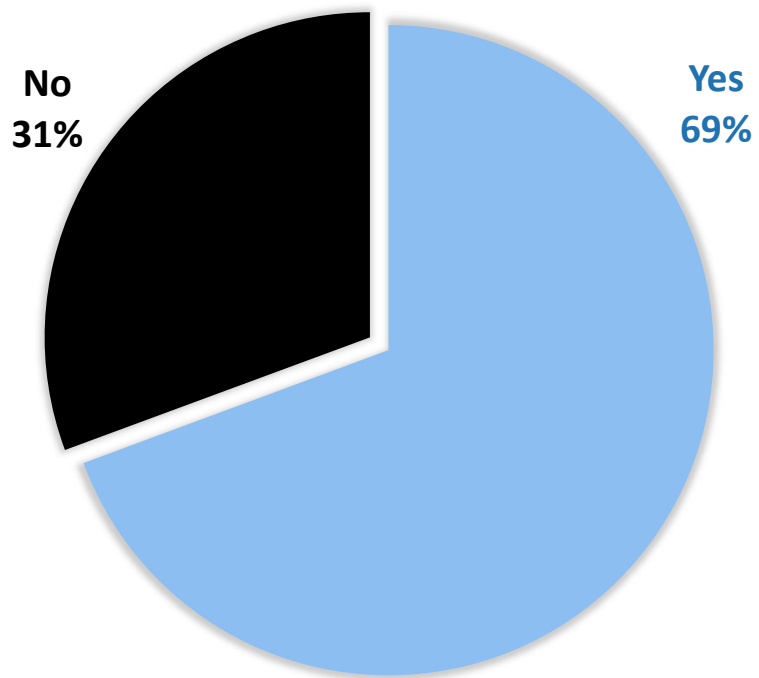


## SUPPLIER'S FOOD SAFETY CULTURE AS A BUSINESS DECISION

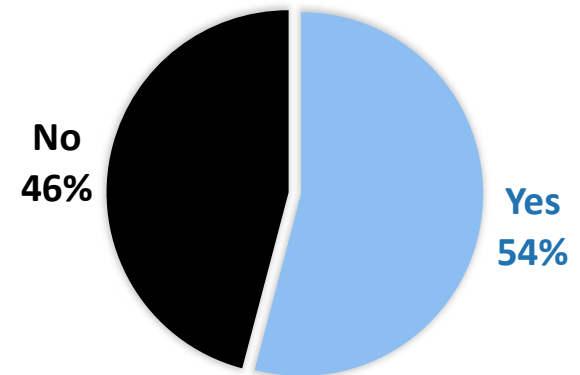


# Top-Down Accountability

SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY FROM SENIOR LEADERSHIP TO FOOD HANDLERS



AUDIT RESULTS USED AS C-SUITE AGENDA TOPICS



# Performance Bonuses Tied to Food Safety Metrics

## MANAGEMENT

Regulatory  
Inspection  
Scores

29%

71%

Third-Party  
Audit  
Scores

54%

46%

Customer  
Foodborne  
Illness  
Complaints

14%

86%

■ Yes ■ No

## STORE-LEVEL EMPLOYEES

Regulatory  
Inspection  
Scores

12%

88%

Third-Party  
Audit  
Scores

24%

76%

Customer  
Foodborne  
Illness  
Complaints

9%

91%

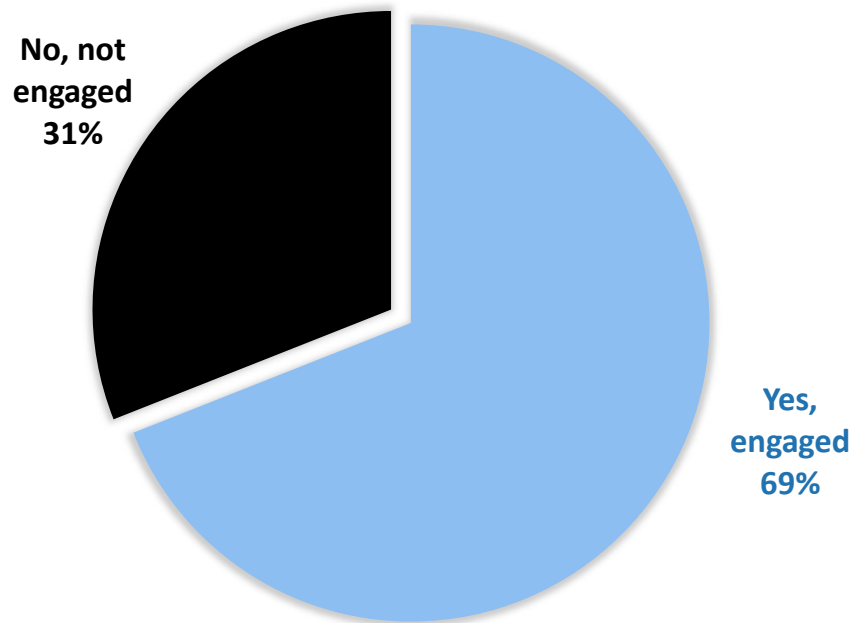
■ Yes ■ No

# Other Forms of Incentive

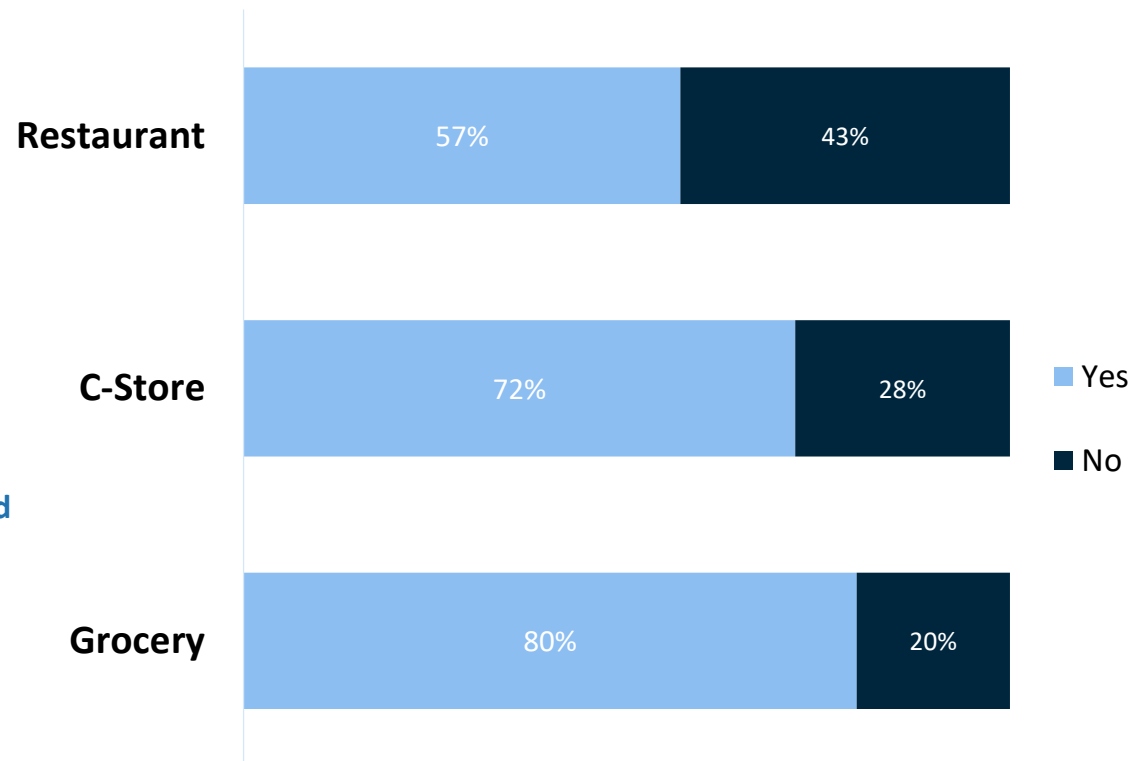
- Pop quizzes
- Spontaneous inquiry into food safety knowledge
- Positive reinforcement
- Food safety-theme contests
- Creative scheduling
- Cash prizes
- Other

# 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

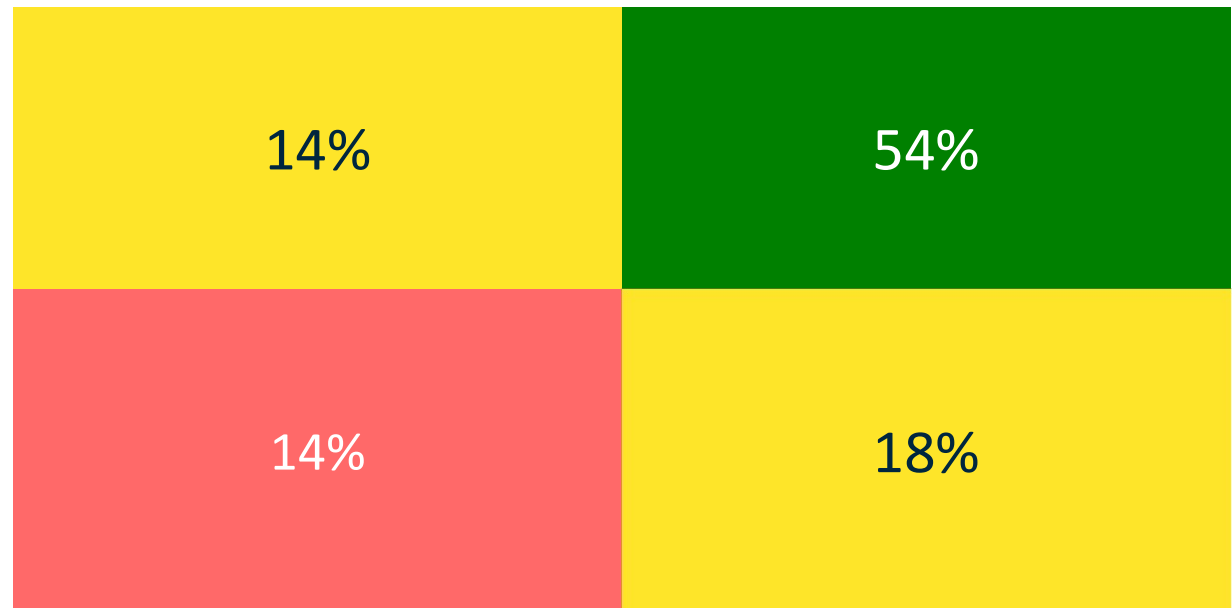
14%

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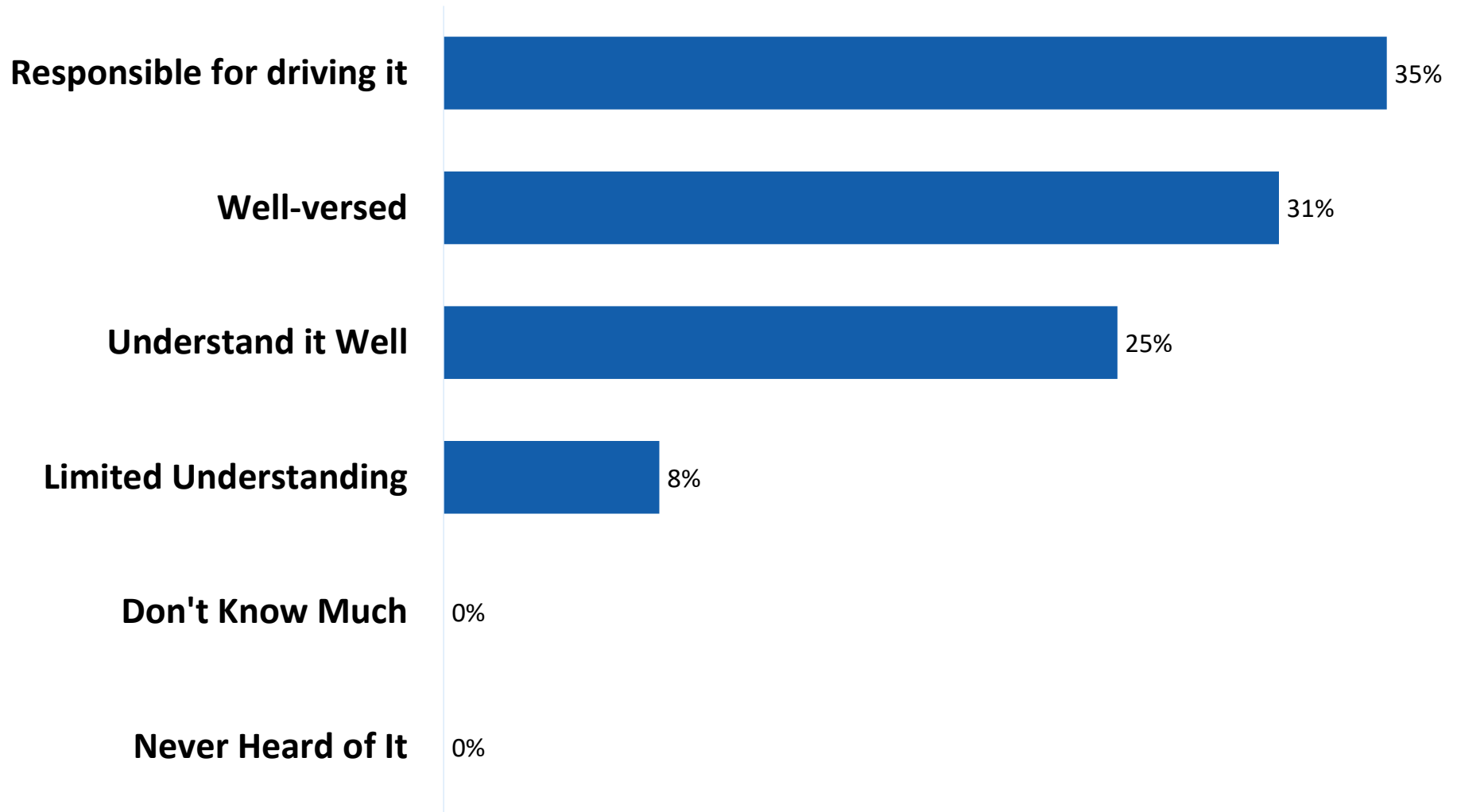
No

14%

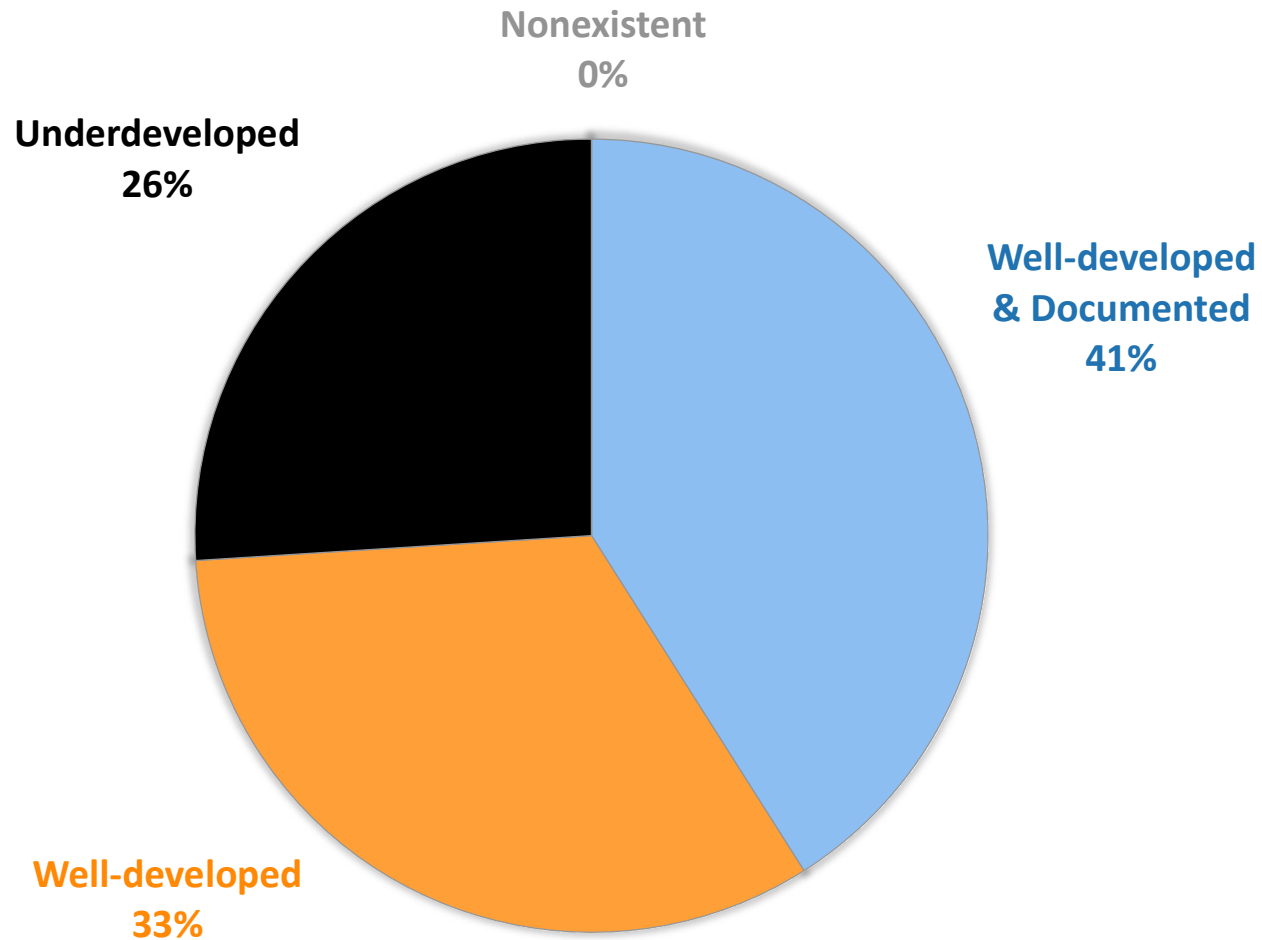
18%



# 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.



# Thank you!



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