



Food Safety Program

December 2016

The Food Safety Program works to ensure food sold or served at restaurants, markets, schools, institutions and other retail food establishments is safe. The changing face of the food system makes this mission more challenging each year. Nearly every week there are media reports on new nationwide food recalls or deadly outbreaks. Advances in food testing and laboratory reporting are driving the increase in food recalls and the discovery of foodborne pathogens in more diverse foods. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that each year roughly 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million people) get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die of foodborne diseases.

We focus on activities that strengthen food safety knowledge, practices and policy in Washington State. These activities include educating public health professionals, industry, and consumers on safe practices; ensuring our rules and guidance address contemporary food safety issues and practices; and responding to foodborne illness outbreaks, food recalls, and other food-related emergencies. Each year, 40-60 reported foodborne illness outbreaks are investigated in our state. We assist local health staff in these investigations, analyze the data, and use this outbreak data to advise us on needed rule changes, inspection focus, or training needs.

Services

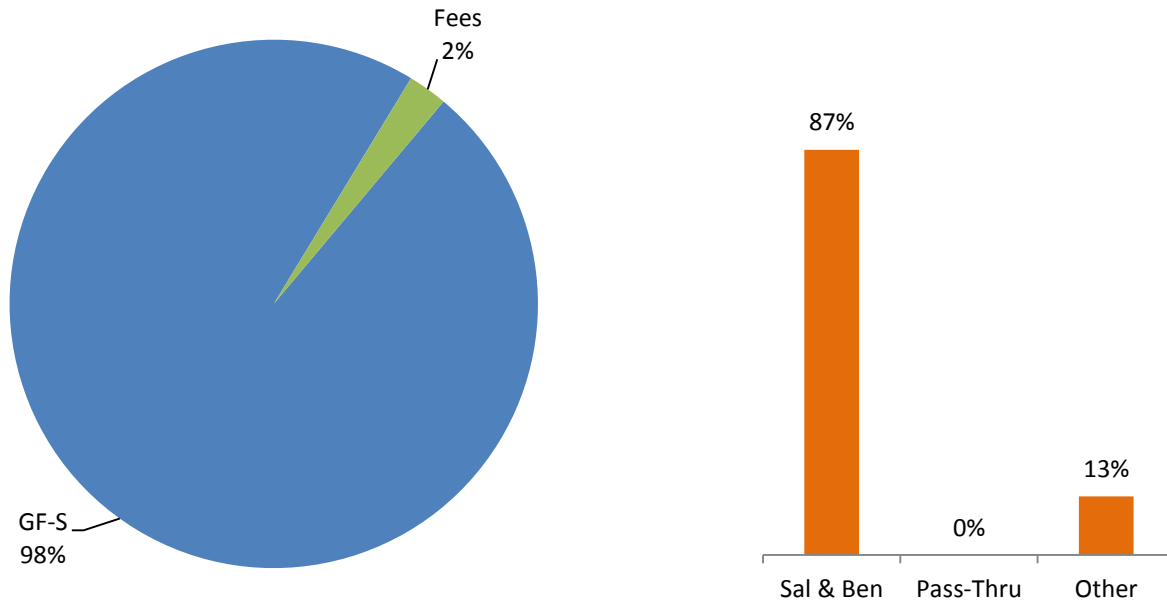
- Work with local, state, tribal, and federal agencies to provide information and coordinate a rapid response to foodborne illness outbreaks, food trace-backs, and food recalls
- Provide up-to-date food safety information and best practice to all partners and stakeholders on an ongoing basis and at annual workshops
- Provide classroom and field training to retail food inspectors with local health jurisdictions and other state agencies on interpreting rules, inspection techniques, and conducting foodborne outbreak investigations
- Update and develop rules and guidance to address food safety issues and best practices
- Provide input at the national level on food safety issues and model food code development
- Provide liaison between industry and regulators when chain stores or restaurants have alternative methods for meeting the intent of regulations
- Develop educational materials, such as multi-language brochures or posters, on various high risk practices that contribute to food borne illnesses

Stakeholders

- State residents and visitors
- Local health jurisdictions
- State departments of Early Learning, Social and Health Services, Agriculture, and Corrections
- Federal Food and Drug Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Retail food industry and interest groups, such as the Washington Restaurant Association, Washington Food Industry Association, Food Growers of WA, and Food Service Employees Unions

Food Safety Fiscal Information

2015-17 biennium



	GF-S	Federal	Dedicated	Fees	Total	Sal & Ben	Investments	Other
Total	1,053,626	0	0	26,042	1,079,668	940,152	0	139,516

Recent Funding History

2009-11 biennium - Food Safety took an ongoing \$292,000 biennial GF-S reduction.