

Evaluation of food safety practices in the retail outlets of west Delhi (India)

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The concern about Food safety has increased globally due to the high incidences of food borne illnesses. Improper holding temperatures, cross contamination and poor personal hygiene of food handlers are few of the reasons for the prevalence of the pathogenic microbes in the retail outlets. Limited information is available regarding food safety knowledge and attitudes of retail foodservice employees in India. Hence, the present study was undertaken to assess the food safety practices in the various retail outlets located in West Delhi, India. A total of 100 different retail outlets were surveyed. The findings of the study revealed that the attitudes and practices need more attention on the implementation level. 92% of the outlets had a code of hygienic practices each but there was a lack of proper training about the food safety and hygiene among the workers. Only 57% of retail outlets were washing their fresh produce (fruits and vegetables) before selling and remaining even lacked wash water facilities. All the retail outlets (100%) were following grading and sorting and even FIFO but correct knowledge of storage temperatures for different perishable commodities was not known to workers at ground level in 62% of the outlets. It was strongly felt that foodservice employees in these retail outlets require basic yet informative training about the food safety aspects.

Biography

Shalini Sehgal is currently working as an Associate Professor in the Department of Food Technology at the Bhaskaracharya College of Applied Sciences (University of Delhi), India. Her area of interest is Food Safety. She has been associated with the studies on 'Safety aspects of Street Foods' (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India) and 'Fresh Produce' (WHO), Capacity Building in Food Safety with agencies like APEDA, IGNOU, DBT, FSSAI, MOFPI and USFDA.

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