



Technical Bulletin

Setting the Standard for Food Safety and Pest Management Solutions

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Do you really understand what I said?



As I think back to my early experiences with food safety I was not often told to wash or when to wash my hands I was told I must wear gloves. Additionally, I was only trained for my specific job duty. However, if I ever changed duties, I was expected to know how to do the job without any oversight or being told the limits or responsibilities.

Food Safety is more than what you say, it is how the person on the other end of the conversation interprets what you say. Food handlers are often expected to know all food safety regulations with little to no training. Did you know the FDA food code is over 700 pages? The

Food Code is a reference document that health agencies model their own state or local codes around.

Let's test you brain: Do you know how many chapters there are in the FDA food Code, and which chapter applies to which section?

A food handler may only be responsible for Chapters 2- 4 but operate in and around the other 5 chapters. So, you got it now are eight chapters, but which one applies to personal hygiene, plumbing, food, physical facilities? Most certified food managers are required to be three quarters knowledgeable in food safety, so there is always room for improvement. This is the minimum rating for a Certified Food Safety Manager on national accredited exams. However just because I passed an exam doesn't mean my food handlers will not touch your sandwich with a soiled glove. or with my bare hands.

So, to really understand is to be conditioned through repetition. If you have been told that you must wear gloves at all times, they will wear them at "all times". The reason is you have been told to wear them and not when to remove them. Most food handlers are not taught or provided with a clear expectation on when they should and should not be worn. Because, many food handlers have been ill trained or poorly conditioned they might wear them at the inappropriate times. Clarity in food safety only comes with repetition. Setting a clear expectation with a clear explanation is the key to understanding food safety.

Submitted by: Darrell Newell

**Director of Retail Food Safety & QA
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The Yellow Meal Worm



Order: Blattodea **Family:** Blattidae **Genus:** *Periplaneta* **Species:** *P. fuliginosa*

The Smokey Brown Cockroach is distinguished by its shiny, dark brownish-black mahogany color. It is a relatively large roach reaching an adult length of about 1.250 inches long. Both male and female adults have wings and use them well often flying from trees and high places to lower targets. Although closely related to the American cockroach (*Periplaneta americana*), the Smokey Brown Cockroach is readily distinguishable from it by its uniformly dark brown-mahogany coloration. Furthermore, unlike the American cockroach, which possess a light-rimmed pattern on its thorax, the Smokey Brown Cockroach's thorax is dark and shiny.

Like all roaches, Smokey Brown Cockroaches enter homes through cracks, crevices and openings. So, the best ways to prevent entry without resorting to insecticides include the following three preventative measures: Remove unnecessary nesting places outside, seal obvious entry points and practice good maintenance and cleanliness. If chemical control is necessary, baits and residual insecticides are the best options for control.

Submitted by: Rich Gibson, ACE, CHA



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Shifting the Culture

	Shift		
	1	2	3
Loose Tools	Green	Green	Green
Internal Audit Score	Green	Green	Green
Holds	Green	Green	Green
Waste	Green	Green	Green
Defects	Green	Green	Green
Meetings	Green	Green	Green
Training	Green	Green	Green

It is never easy to tell someone their baby is ugly, but sometimes you have to be open and honest. The baby, in this context, is the food safety culture at a GFSI level certified facility who has always been able to navigate the ins and outs of an audit to get their "ticket punched". After years and years of living by the code of "we'll fix it for the audit" a CFS Consultant finally spoke up on why their audit was a costly and stressful endeavor. That feedback didn't sit well with the Senior Management team, who essentially indexed their level of support on how much money they spent on the program. Wrong approach.

Through a lot of heated discussions, action planning and delegation a system was put in place to shift the culture from a reactive mindset to a proactive mentality. It took some time, turnover and infighting, the entire team turned it around and sailed through their audit with their highest score and rating ever.

Starting with the management team, the audit standard was divided and subdivided amongst departments and several additional internal auditors were trained and tasked with auditing their counterparts at least quarterly to keep everyone on their toes. Scorecards were created and updated frequently (as results changed or each month) to show internal compliance to assignments and performance against the standards. It became a friendly competition to see who could come out on top. The approach started from the top and worked its way down. As time passed ownership of programs and performance was passed onto hourly production employees who were allotted an extra hour per week to focus on their assignments, and most excelled at it.

Training was held in smaller groups more frequently and went beyond the "this is what you must do" and broken into examples and "this is WHY you need to do it". It was effective and geared towards teams based on their seniority with the tenured employees getting more advanced training.

Counting waste, defects (missing code dates, number of holds, order accuracy attainment, etc.) and number of loose items collected by department (foreign material control) personnel worked hard to show as green on the scorecards. As their audit date approached there was less stress and the facility was "audit ready, all the time".

Shifting the culture in any workplace using any standard is not easy. Tenure, age, demographics, national origin, generation (Gen-X vs. Millennials vs. Baby Boomers) always factors into success and always needs to be considered. Each person reacts differently based on their hierarchy of needs and their level of motivation.

Take Away Tips:

- Focus on the people first, the audit second
- Delegate and empower
- Scorecard it
- Celebrate wins

Submitted by: Rich Gibson, ACE, CHA