



# 2017

**Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award**

KANSAS CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



City of Kansas City, Missouri  
Kansas City Health Department  
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Kansas City, MO 64108



## Executive Summary

Located in the heart of the Midwest, Kansas City is a mosaic of nationalities, cultures and ethnicities. Rich in multiculturalism, Kansas City is proud its citizens and guests can experience a piece of these different cultures when working, playing, or visiting. The Kansas City Health Department openly embraces the melting pot our City is, all while striving to be a leader in food safety.

The Kansas City Health Department has a robust Environmental Public Health Program, with a large-scale Food Protection Program. We have made significant strides in the way we approach food safety through conducting risk-based inspections, educational outreach, use of technology, partnerships with other jurisdictions, and surveys designed to provide feedback for Program improvement.

In the fall of 2001, the Program enrolled in the FDA's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. Over the course of the next 14 years, the Program focused on internal processes to align with the FDA Program Standards. Self-assessments showed the successes in our Program yet it also shined a very bright light on our deficiencies. It was clear where we needed to be, but the challenge was how to get there. In late 2015, the Kansas City Health Department's Environmental Health Program became the second in the nation to meet all 9 Standards. While we celebrate the success of meeting the Standards, throughout the process the Program has remain dedicated to continuous quality improvement for internal and external services.

Starting internally, we began evaluating the Program structure. Gaps were identified in our processes, our training, and our outdated materials. Initiating changes to outdated food codes built the basis for our regulatory food safety inspections. Shifting focus to conducting risk-based inspections began a few years later. From there, the Program began using emerging technology to our advantage. Providing our inspectors with touchscreen tablets, wireless printers, and a software system with the capability to print anywhere expedited our inspection times and put us on the forefront of food safety programs.

Once we grasped our inequities internally, we began addressing our external inequities. We asked ourselves, "How can we better serve our community?" Surveying our stakeholders was key in assisting us in identifying those gaps. After conducting a survey and hearing from our stakeholders, the results identified the need for our Program to address community members with limited English proficiency. The Program had fallen short of our own customer service expectations. We needed to ensure this community rich in culture, one we pride ourselves in, was receiving the tools they needed to thrive in Kansas City, Missouri. With food safety a top priority, the Program began looking at resources to better assist our restaurant operators in their success stories.



This is where our journey starts. A journey of set-backs, bumps in the road, and victories. Looking at the bigger picture, the Environmental Public Health Program hit the ground running to become more culturally aware of the needs that our community. Developing a wider-range of food safety trainings, creating new positions, hiring employees that spoke different languages, and utilizing a Language Line translation service for voice and print were just a few of the steps the Program took to further embrace this cultural dynamic.



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## Part I: Demographic Profile

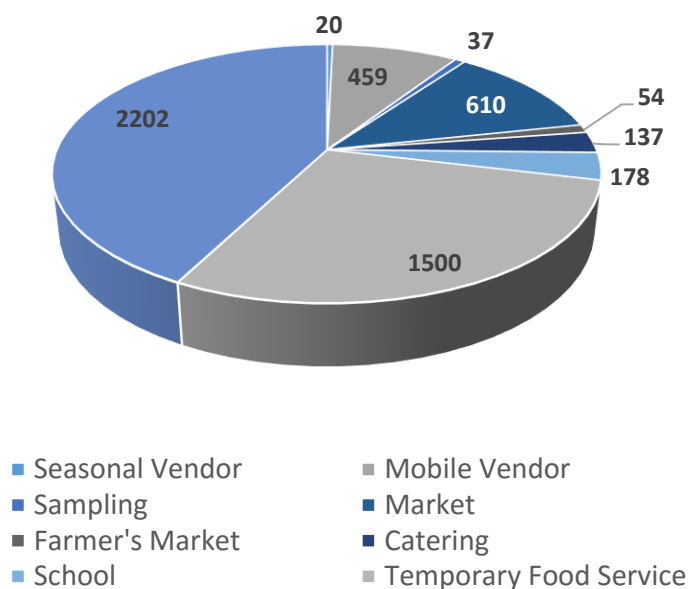
Founded in 1838, Kansas City, Missouri is in the northwest region of the state. The city borders the state of Kansas and is situated along the Missouri River. Kansas City spans 319 square miles and is home to 470,000 residents, making it the largest city in Missouri, both in land area and population. Kansas City is surrounded by a 15-county metropolitan area that includes more than 2 million citizens and routinely hosts a daytime population of approximately 1 million people. Kansas City has a diverse population including 10% Hispanic/Latino, 30% African American, and 59% Caucasian. Kansas City has a median household income of \$50,259, just slightly above the state average, yet below the national. Estimated median home or condo value is \$138,500, a significant increase from \$83,300 in 2000.



The Kansas City Health Department's Environmental Public Health Program requires that all food establishments, permanent or temporary, have a valid food permit through the Program. The Program regulates just over 5000 permits and conducts all food safety inspections for these permits under the Kansas City Food Code. While regulation of permits is significant, the Program plays a key role in the creation of the Health

Department's overall goal to be an Academic Health Department with food safety courses and educational inspection procedures. Since its implementation in 2004, the food safety education program has trained more than 100,000 Food Handlers and Food Managers in Kansas City.

Permit Structure in Kansas City, MO



The Kansas City Health Department is city-run and has been serving the community for over 150 years. Previously, programs were housed in buildings throughout the city, creating a barrier to citizens seeking services. In 1997, all programs moved to one building in a centralized location along the Troost corridor, an area of town seen as the city's most prominent racial and economic dividing line. This location has aided the Department in their efforts to create partnerships within the community to address health inequities.

Recognizing that Kansas City is comprised of many different cultures and understanding the specific needs those communities may have in regards to food safety is key. The Kansas City Health Department and its Environmental Public Health Program are committed to educating and building relationships with establishments to improve food safety.

## **Part I: Program Resources**

The Environmental Public Health Program has a total operating budget of \$2,160,245. Built in to the Kansas City Food Code, permit fees generate the majority of the Program's budget. Fees are based on the cost to for the Program to complete the work at the establishments and are adjusted per the Consumer Price Index published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The fee scheduled is designed to apply fees based on the type and size of an operation.

Food Handler training is a priority in Kansas City, ensuring food safety education to those serving Kansas City residents and guests. Between online food handler training to training in house, the Program generates just under \$200,000 annually. Food Handler cards are issued for 3-year interval and Food Managers cards are issued for 5-year intervals.

<b>Kansas City Environmental Public Health Program Fees</b>	
<b>Food Handler Training (Online)</b>	\$25
<b>Food Handler Training (In Class)</b>	\$20
<b>Food Manager Training</b>	\$50
<b>Permit Processing Fee</b>	\$100
<b>Food Establishment Permit Range (based on # of employees)</b>	\$343-599
<b>Food Establishment Re-Inspection (based on # of employees)</b>	\$125-241
<b>Food Market Range (based on size of establishment)</b>	\$256-1278
<b>Food Market Re-Inspection (based on size of establishment)</b>	\$172-286
<b>Additional Permit Types (Sampling, Push Carts, Mobile Units, Catering)</b>	\$57-430
<b>Farmer's Market</b>	\$115
<b>Temporary Events (1 day to 14 days)</b>	\$57-172
<b>Re-Instatement Fee Following Suspension</b>	\$100

While permit fees cover the majority of the budget, the Program has actively applied and received grant funding opportunities to further advance Program initiatives. Currently, the Program has an active grant from NACCHO to be a mentor to other local public health agencies trying to achieve the FDA's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. This is the second grant from NACCHO the Program has received and the third agency to be mentored.

The Environmental Public Health Program is comprised of 25 full time staff including a Program Manager, Assistant Program Manager, Training Manager, three Field Supervisors, and 19 Inspectors. The Program also includes seven members of the administrative support team. Recently the Program created an additional six part-time Public Health Trainee positions. These positions are twofold. First, increased staff numbers would address the economic boost seen across Kansas City in recent years. With the consistent opening of new establishments, the need for additional staff was apparent. The second and arguably more important justification for added positions would be the recruiting tool to public health and food safety that the trainee position would provide. The Department has partnered with higher learning institutions throughout the area to recruit students interested in careers in the public health sector.



## Part I: Program Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The Program utilizes the Department's vision as its driving force when developing goals and objectives. The over-arching goal is to move from the traditional medical model to a social-ecological model in an effort to increase health equity. The Department has identified seven key objectives to attain its vision.

This effort to move public health upstream is a focus of the Program by setting goals to align with Department objectives. These goals include decreasing the number of risk factor violations observed during routine inspections through an emphasis in education rather than immediate enforcement.

After identifying the gaps from the self-assessment, the need to enrich and support community partnerships was identified. Beginning with offering Food Manager's training in Spanish, the Program looks to expand all food handler courses (in person training) to include additional languages.

The Program plans to partner with community groups, such as faith-based organizations and homeowner's associations, to enhance ways of food safety knowledge in a meaningful and culturally competent manner.

Internal goals include updating to the 2017 FDA Food Code, policy and advocacy development, and increasing the footprint on social media to reach more citizens. Partnering with Department biostatisticians to analyze violation data, specifically risk factor violations, will assist in determining educational priorities even further. Making data driven decisions will be essential in the future successes of public health in Kansas City.



Currently, the inspector training program is being revamped to create an individualized and modifiable training plan at every level of the Program from Administrative Assistant through Program Manager in an effort to develop and sustain a high performing organization. Over the past several years, recent hiring practices have focused on hiring a multi-cultural staff that further goals of integrating and sustaining diversity, inclusion, and equity. The Program is determined to support the Department's initiatives related to inclusivity in the workplace and community. All Environmental staff attended implicit bias training; the knowledge provided a more cognitive approach on how subconscious biases may affect their daily interactions with restaurant operators.

*"We exist to assure conditions wherein all Kansas City, Missouri residents and visitors can be healthy. We act with compassion and focus on prevention. Through our dedication and innovation, we strive for health equity for us all"*

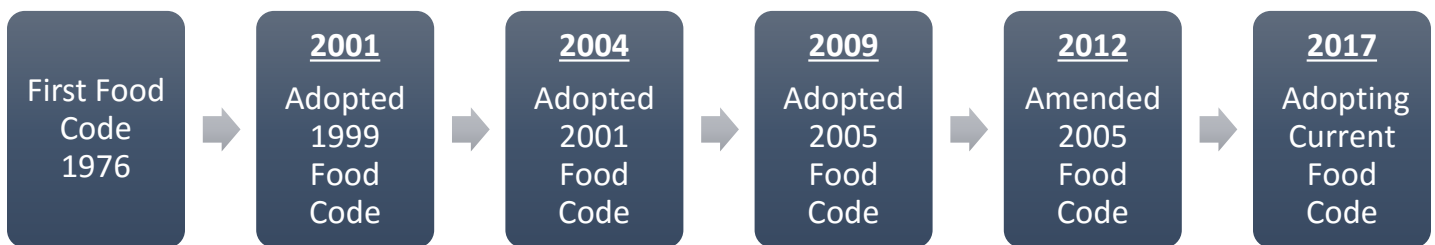
*– Kansas City Health Department Vision*

## Part II: Regulatory Foundation

As a branch of the City of Kansas City government, the Program derives its regulatory authority through City ordinances. While the Kansas City Food Code is based on the FDA Food Code, they differ slightly. One unique attribute of the Kansas City Food Code is the ability to adopt some, all, or none of the FDA Food Code. It also allows for the ability to create additional components which enables the Program to specifically address regulatory concerns that may not be outlined in the FDA Food Code. The current Kansas City Food Code contains a specific chapter dedicated to “*Compliance and Enforcement*”. This chapter provides the capability of addressing non-conforming permit holders through hearings, suspension, probation, and revocation to ensure active managerial control.

Early in the Program, the 1976 Food Code was utilized as the primary source of all food safety inspections which was a very narrow set of regulations. In 2001, enrollment in the lengthy journey of the FDA’s Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards began. This was really the beginning of the Food Protection Program. Bringing the Kansas City Food Code up-to-date was a priority.

As a first course of action, the inadequate 1976 Food Code was replaced with the FDA’s 1999 Food Code. Changing a city ordinance is a cumbersome process. Preparation of the new ordinance (in this case the Food Code) is designed to best suit the needs of the Program. After the draft is prepared, the ordinance is submitted to the City Council (chapter 30 article III sections 30-71). Once appropriated by the full Council the measure is placed on a ballot and given to the vote of the people. If the ballot measure passes, the new ordinance will be enacted 90 days thereafter. Through the Program’s dedication to food safety, this strenuous process was completed three additional times after 2001 and is currently in the process of updating to the newest version of the FDA Food Code.



The Program has 13 different permits to better meet the needs of those serving food in the community. Each permit is unique and has specific food safety requirements. Presently, food service establishment inspection intervals for restaurant and market type permits are quantifiably assessed using several factors including, but not limited to, type of establishment, population served, food safety training experience, size of service population, history of compliance, and complexity of menu food preparation procedures.

Over the past several years, there has been an emergence of participation in Farmer’s Markets in the City. Farmers from across several states would come to Kansas City to sample their local grown produce. While the Program saw this an economic growth for the farmer and the City, concerns were raised on food safety procedures. Through partnership with the City Market and farmers a permit was developed to allow for produce to be sampled at the market, while still meeting minimum food safety requirements. In addition to the Farmer’s Market permit, a Sampling Permit was created to allow for new business owners to sample their products at the market as well.



## Part II: Staff Training Program

Training prior to 2009 met minimum requirements and mirrored many food safety training standards seen nationwide. Inspectors were provided with relevant code ordinances, key inspection equipment, and would shadow a senior inspector for up to six weeks before being released to conduct inspections independently. In order to align staff training with *FDA Standard 2: Trained Regulatory Staff*, a Training Manager position was created in 2009. Through FDA grant assistance in 2011 the training program was restructured in accordance with this Standard and set expectations and practices, as well as provided appropriate resources. Primary objectives of this program aimed to motivate and educate inspectors on conducting risk-based, independent inspections. Two training procedure manuals were created: New Inspector Training and Continuing Education.

New Inspector Training outlines five core areas of focus: Pre-inspection, Inspection Observations and Performance, Oral Communication, Written Communication, and Professionalism. A combination of classroom and online training set the foundation of food safety knowledge. Simultaneously, new inspectors shadow senior staff on up to 30 observational inspections to gain on the job technical application and observe Program practices in real time. Within 8-10 weeks of hire, new inspectors which demonstrate the ability to effectively utilize the KCMO Food Code and have a minimum of 25 led inspections are released to conduct independent inspections. All inspectors are required to attend both Food Handler and Food Manager Courses, as well as a Serve Safe certification course, to become familiar with the level of food safety knowledge they can expect from most restaurant operators.



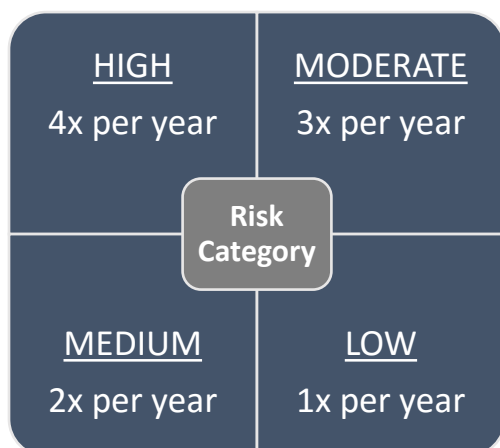
The Continuing Education plan is initiated 18 months after the initial start date. At that time, each inspector is standardized to align with FDA guidelines. All inspectors are expected to complete a minimum of 20 contact hours of continuing food safety education every 36 months. These hours may be acquired through online training courses, attendance at local, state, or federal in person training, or other approved training methods. In the last three years, several training opportunities were made possible from grant awards through AFDO/FDA. Personnel have participated in the FDA courses Risk Based Inspection Methods at Retail, Foodborne Illness Investigations, and Principles of Epidemiology course offered by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. All staff have completed the CDC's online course *Environmental Assessment of Foodborne Illness Outbreaks* as part of the Program's enrollment in the CDC's NEARS Program.

To increase consistency and provide in the field training opportunities, supervisors conduct inspection audits with inspectors weekly. The Program holds biweekly staff meetings creating opportunities for all staff to provide feedback regarding upcoming on program developments and review training on a chosen topic. Each meeting sets aside time for an open forum to discuss rare or unusual observations from recent food inspections to address rarely utilized code references.



## Part II: Utilizing HACCP Principals

For over a decade, the Environmental Public Health Program has been utilizing the tools necessary to run a food program based on HACCP principles. In 2000, the Program began using an electronic food inspection software Paragon, while in the field while conducting food safety inspections. The software is able to track risk factor violations, as well as repeat violations. In 2007, the software was upgraded to conform with the Conference for Food Protection form to include: In, Out, Not Observed, or Not Applicable.



After enrolling in the Standards, the Program reevaluated procedures through a risk assessment by shifting focus on establishments that pose the greatest risk of foodborne illness risk factors resulting in illness. It was decided to make changes the frequency of inspection intervals from the traditional three-risk category system of High/Medium/Low to a four-risk category system of High/Moderate/Medium/Low. The new four-risk category system would increase the Program's presence in full service establishments and those serving highly susceptible populations.

To ensure that HACCP principles are a primary focus when conducting food safety inspections, the Program required all inspectors to attend FDA Risk Based Inspection Methods trainings. Adding another layer, all supervisors and managers were required to attend HACCP focused classes to become experts for inspectors to rely on. Training curriculum provided staff a thorough understanding of HACCP principles, the ability to write a HACCP plan, and review HACCP plan submittals. With these skill sets, staff were able to review and approve variances for HACCP plans.

Before an inspector even begins conducting a food safety inspection, HACCP principles are the mindset when reviewing the establishment's file is prior to Paragon. While conducting the inspection, the focus is on public health rational and providing education to reduce the occurrence of risk factor violations. Inspectors provide education and informational handouts focusing on different foodborne risk factors, such as hand washing, food storage, cooking temperatures, and employee illness policies to initiate active managerial control.

Inspectors are trained to encourage operators to take immediate corrective action for all foodborne illness risk factors violations and other critical violations at the time of inspection. If violations are unable to be corrected at the time of inspection, a follow up inspection is assigned to ensure compliance. In some situations, long-term corrective action measures are required.

In 2013, the Program created a Risk Control Plan policy. When out-of-compliance risk factor trends are identified, the Risk Control Plan Worksheet is completed during the inspection and follow up is provided to ensure successful corrective action. Operators and inspectors agree on the plan of action, which may include maintaining records (i.e. cold holding logs). Records are submitted for a short period of time, typically 6-8 weeks, for review until the next inspection. This policy was developed to assist operators with strengthening existing food safety management systems through intervention strategies designed to achieve immediate and long-term compliance.

## Part II: Quality Assurance Program

The Program has deliberately and purposefully designed a comprehensive quality assurance program to assure uniformity among field inspection staff. The purpose of the quality assurance program serves as a guide for inspectors, supervisors, and managers to provide an objective measure of consistency. The development of the current quality assurance program coincided with the 2011 development of the staff training program.

The assurance program identifies areas needing improvement, assesses staff consistency, and advances industry and consumer confidence by enhancing uniformity. The Program utilizes multiple tools to track quality assurance, including: on-site training audits, joint inspection audits, follow-up audits, and FDA standardization audits.

During the New Inspector Training, the Training Manager utilizes on-site training audits to educate inspectors on the guidelines for inspections. These audits allow create an individualized approach to guiding new staff through risk based inspection methods and help ensure consistency. During these audits, the Food Inspection Field Training Worksheet is applied. Field Training Audits are conducted during all types of inspection (routine, follow-up, pre-opening, complaint).

The Training Manager is a certified FDA Standardizing Officer and completes standardization of employees a minimum of 18 months after hire. The standardization process gives additional instruction on how to properly interpret regulatory requirements, program policies, and compliance and enforcement procedures when faced with challenging situations in the field. Another benefit of that standardization process is the emphasis on risk based inspection methods and gives best practices to communicate the public health significance of risk factor violations to operators in a consistent manner.

Supervisors are expected to employ two different methods of auditing in ensure quality assurance. The Food Establishment Inspection Audit Form is used during joint inspections. During these joint inspections, supervisors observe inspectors throughout the course of the inspection and give constructive feedback afterward. The second tool supervisors use to improve quality assurance is the follow-up audit. Follow-up audits are conducted within 24-48 hours of a routine inspection being completed. A supervisor conducts an in-person interview with the operator allows for an open dialogue to discuss inspection procedures and inspector professionalism.

In 2010, the Program began conducting Consumer Satisfaction Surveys every other year. The survey is used to collect data to measures customer satisfaction with various aspects of most recent inspections. The data serves as a tool to assess customer satisfaction and rate the quality of professionalism demonstrated by inspectors. Combining operator feedback with the auditing tools ensures the Program is continually looking for ways to improve. Quality improvement processes and consistency are a priority for the Program, especially in regards to food safety.

### Impressions of Inspector

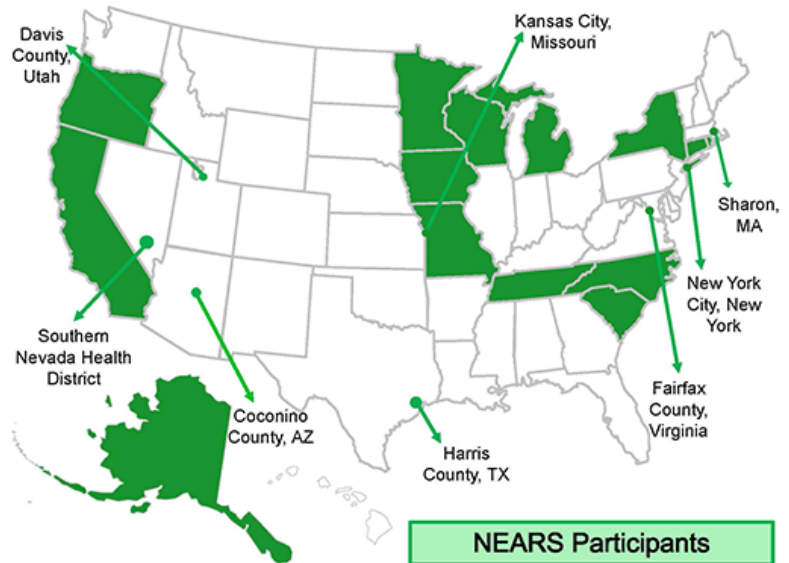


## Part II: Foodborne Illness Response

One out of every six people in this country will experience foodborne illness in 2017. Many of these cases go unreported. The Environmental Public Health Program has focused on increasing the types of avenues of reporting foodborne illness in Kansas City. In addition to the long-standing complaint hotline known as the 3-1-1 Action Center, the Program has developed new protocols for surveillance related to social media outlets and new partnerships with programs within the Department.

Reports of foodborne illness are a concern and made a priority for response. The Program conducts complaint investigations within 48 hours of receipt. Follow up reporting to complainant is conducted within the same time frame. Response to complaint has become such a priority, it has been made a measurable performance measure. While the measure has a goal of 90% of all complaint investigated within 48 hours, the Program has maintained a 95% over the past 4-6 years.

In 2015, the Program has been enrolled in the CDC's NEARS (formerly NVEAIS) and is one of three city Health Departments currently enrolled in the program. The NEARS program is a surveillance system collecting environmental data in an effort to prevent as well as manage current outbreaks. The data collected is used to increase the understanding we as public health officials have of the causes of foodborne illness outbreaks. Inspectors are trained to conduct environmental assessments as part of participation in this program.



In 2013, the Environmental Public Health Program partnered with the Communicable Disease Prevention Program in the Department to create an Outbreak Response team. This team was designed to streamline foodborne illness investigations throughout the Department and set a protocol for responding to foodborne illness outbreaks, environmental hazards, and/or other public health emergencies.

In 2015, the City experienced a measles outbreak where multiple food workers from five restaurants throughout the metro area were excluded from food service in the interest of public health. In this situation, the Outbreak Response Team partnered together to ensure the appropriate measures were taking place for exclusion and return to work. It was imperative for the two programs to work together seamlessly to ensure that food safety measures were executed to prevent any further illness to residents or visitors of Kansas City.

In the last year, the Outbreak Response Team convened again to analyze program definitions of a foodborne illness complaint and response procedures for those types of complaints. Gaps were identified and definitions were strengthened to increase consistency within the two programs. With each program's role more clearly defined, communication during foodborne illness investigations increased and were completed in a timelier manner. While neighboring jurisdictions have reported increased outbreaks over the last three years, Kansas City has had no foodborne illness outbreaks to report.



## **Part II: Compliance and Enforcement**

One unique aspect of the Kansas City Food Code is Chapter 8: Compliance and Enforcement. This chapter allows for the Program to ensure accountability of all permit holders. While the primary goal of the inspection process is compliance, options for additional enforcement are available when necessary.

A food service establishment that fails to be in compliance with code regulations during an inspection is assigned a re-inspection and assessed associated fees. Procedure states that if the establishment fails to come into compliance with noted critical and repeat non-critical violations by the third re-inspection a summary suspension of the Food Service Permit may be issued.



Immediate permit suspension may be warranted if it is determined that an imminent health hazard exists. Imminent health hazards include but are not limited to: loss of power, lack of hot water, vector infestation, or foodborne illness outbreak.

Establishments that have a history of critical and repeat non-critical violations resulting from damaged or failing physical facilities may need additional time to achieve long term compliance. In this situation a compliance schedule is a beneficial tool. The operator submits a timeline detailing the scope of work to be completed addressing each deficiency. Once the compliance schedule is approved, follow-up visits are conducted at agreed upon intervals to ensure the establishment is adhering to all correction deadlines.

Establishments with a chronic history of repeat risk factor violations and non-compliance may be required to complete a probationary period to maintain their permit in good standing. An establishment placed on probation receives a routine inspection monthly for a period of up to six months. The probationary period is considered the final option prior to a permit revocation hearing. While on probation, if an operator fails to come into compliance or shows blatant negligence in regard to food safety, revocation of the Food Service Permit may be warranted. To date, only four permits have been revoked and revocation is reserved as the final option considered in enforcement for non-compliant food service providers.

The Program has developed written procedures for addressing food service operators or citizens who are found serving food to the public without a valid permit. The “illegal operation” is documented and the operator is provided information on how to properly obtain a food service permit and given a warning. In the event a food service provider is found operating a second time without a valid permit, a General Order Summons is issued which mandates the offender to attend a court date to face a fine up to \$1000 and or up to 180 days in jail. A “Social Media Team” was created in late 2016 to increase Program awareness of illegal operations. When an illegal event is discovered, the event coordinator is notified of the permit requirement and given opportunity to comply before enforcement action is necessary.

While Chapter 8 of the Kansas City Food Code grants the Program the authority to exact enforcement methods, the priority remains focused on education to gain compliance when foodborne risk factors violations are observed. The Program seeks to remain a resource for food establishment operators and work with permit holders to reduce the risk of foodborne illness outbreaks in Kansas City. However, strict enforcement tactics will be utilized when necessary.

## Part II: Communication

The Program has worked vigorously over the last few years to foster communication that provides a fluid exchange of information between parties. Knowing that a strategic partnership is based on a shared set of values, collaboration with other local public health agencies is essential.

In 2012, the Program along with five other local jurisdictions and the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) united to develop a reciprocity agreement for food handler training in the metropolitan area. Each jurisdiction's Food Handler Course was compared and changes were made to each to ensure consistent delivery of the most important factors in food safety. Through this partnership, a reciprocity agreement was signed and officially implemented. This agreement allowed for food workers to complete a food handler course in any of the participating jurisdictions and the certification would be recognized in all six areas. Following the implementation, the reciprocity agreement was adopted as a NACCHO Best Practice.



Not only is the collaboration with other local public health agencies significant, the Program relies on input of community and industry. The Mayor of Kansas City appoints a Food Advisory Board. The board is comprised of academia, industry, Health Department officials, and members at large. Each member has a significant role in food safety through their respective employment and is a direct link to influencing organizations such as the Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association and the Retail Grocer's Association. Board members are encouraged to bring their expertise and insight to assist in reducing food safety risk factors by providing guidance on policies, procedures, and collaboration of stakeholders.

Understanding industry stakeholders are most in need of Health Department resources, the Program began searching for communication tools. The Department implemented an over the phone interpretation and document translation service with the resources for over 200 languages to better assist in communication of educational materials and inspection results. The Program also began to offer online food handler training in 7 different languages, along with a post-test in those same languages.

As everything is digitized, the Program recognizes the power of social media. Consumers demand to reach someone with a touch of a button or a simple #hashtag. The Program has been developing infographics and videos on food safety to educate the public on proper food safety practices. Through strong a social media presence, the Program can respond to complaints the day they are received. The creation of a dashboard that allows for Twitter tracking of keywords, such as *foodborne* or *illness*, is currently being considered. Through social media, the Program acknowledged top performers in food safety by posting Food Safety Excellence Award winners. Recall notifications and food handler training class schedules are posted on a regular basis in order to reach more citizens.

*"The power of social media is when it is built on top of real activity."* -David Batstone



## **Part II: Supporting Resources**

The Program enlists a vast supply of resources to maintain an inspection system focused on reducing risk factor violations. Staffing, budget, equipment, and educational opportunities all contribute to the success of the Program to prevent the occurrence of foodborne illness.

In 2015 it was determined that the growth of Kansas City and the upswing of the national economy correlated to an increase in the number of food establishment permits issued. With the increased demand for staff, the Program could justify the creation of six full time positions: four Public Health Specialists, one Administrative Assistant, and an Assistant Program Manager. Six part-time Public Health Trainee positions were also created. These new part time positions will not only bridge the gap between higher learning institutions and the public health workforce, they will be an invaluable resource and assist with inspections during the busiest times of year.

Inspection and surveillance equipment is assessed and updated annually, or as necessary. Each staff member is assigned a touchscreen tablet and wireless printer. The Program has utilized Paragon since 2007; the software has online and offline capabilities. A citywide inspection and permitting system will be implemented in August 2017, to provide better services for all customers of the City. Inspectors are equipped with all required inspection supplies (thermometers, test strips, alcohol swabs, and thermo-labels). Each employee is also assigned a fleet vehicle with GPS. Fleet vehicles were updated in 2010 and again in 2014. Additional resources have been allocated to increase the number of fleet vehicles in 2017 to meet staffing demands. Maintaining an adequate fleet of vehicles increases the visibility and ability of staff to conduct inspections within the appropriate timeframe, aiding in the reduction of foodborne illness and risk factor violations.

Active engagement in the professional field has been a priority for the Program. Staff members are encouraged to participate in community associations and professional organizations. The Program currently boasts the Vice President of the Missouri Environmental Health Association, the Vice President of the Kansas City Metro Group (combined group of public health professionals within the Kansas City metro area), a workgroup member for the Conference for Food Protection (CFP) Group on Demonstration of Knowledge, and a first alternate for CFP's Council 2 Administration, Education, and Certification. Encouraging staff to serve on local, state, and federal organizations increases the accessibility of additional resources to staff, as well as increases the capacity for the Program to serve as a leader among food safety professionals.

The Program also strives to provide opportunities for staff to attend conferences related to food safety to ensure the latest trends and challenges seen nationwide can be addressed in Kansas City. The Program has been annually represented by staff at the Mid-Continental Association of Food and Drug Officials (MCAFDO) Educational Conference and the Annual Educational Conference for the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA). In 2014, Kansas City was selected to host the FDA Southwest Regional Conference. Not only did the Program coordinate the event, all program staff were in attendance. Based on the success of the 2014 conference, Kansas City was selected to host again in 2017.



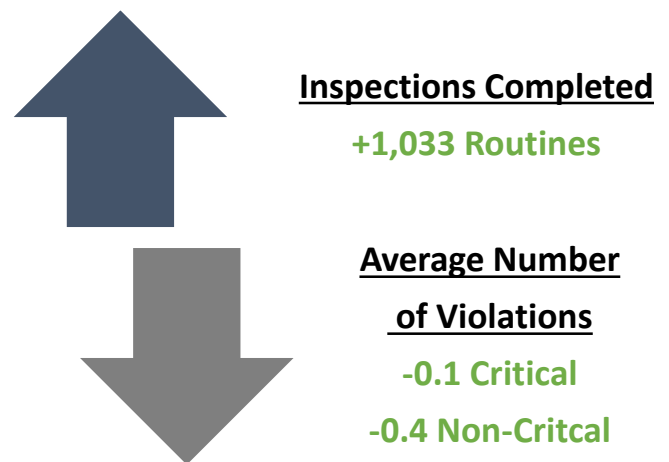


## Part II: Program Evaluation

In 2015, the Program conducted a risk factor study to evaluate the reduction of foodborne illness risk factors. To effectively measure the five major risk factors related to employee behaviors and preparation practices the Program compiled various types of inspection data from foodservice establishments at five-year intervals. The study provided a baseline assessment of the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors in regulated food service establishments.

Comparing the risk factor study baseline results to the *FDA Standard 9- Program Assessment*, the Program's "In Compliance" percentage not only met, but exceeded the targeted goal for the Standards Program. This was a strong indicator that the Program was ahead of the level of compliance the federal government recommended, but whether the Program was seeing a reduction in risk factor violations had yet to be determined.

In 2017 it was determined that another progress evaluation was necessary. During this evaluation, the primary focus was on Critical Violations and Non-Critical violations. Critical and Non-Critical violations are a direct link to foodborne illness risk factors, therefore determining a reduction in cited violations would better assist in verifying improvement. Data indicated that despite an increased number of inspections there was a reduction in average number of critical and non-critical violations cited per inspection.



The Program began to further investigate the reduction of foodborne illness risk factors. Part of this assessment included an overview of the factors that assisted the Program seeing a reduction of risk factor violations. Contributing factors to the success included frequency of inspections, internal training program, food handler training classes offered, and staffing levels.

When the Program moved away from the traditional three-risk category system and switched to the four-risk category system, inspections were completed more frequently. It became apparent that increasing the frequency of inspectors in the establishments and reducing the inspection interval gap the better establishments performed during routine inspections.

The Program rebuilt the training protocol for inspectors. Training was more thorough and focused on utilizing HACCP principles when conducting food safety inspections. Shifting inspector focus and educating operators on prioritizing risk factor violations aided in the reduction of cited violations.

In addition to internal shift of focus, the Program began offering food handler classes online in several languages. By doing this, gaps in language barriers that once existed between inspectors and operators have begun to close in and food safety expectations are available for those with limited English proficiency.

While the Program has seen a reduction in risk factor violations, much work remains. Continuously evaluating the Program practices and standards, partnership with other local jurisdictions, and seeking the needs of the community will be an ongoing process by which we can evaluate the true success of the Program.



### **Part III: Challenges, Objectives, Measurements, & Achievements**

#### **Improved Communication: Breaking Down the Barrier**

A crucial part of the inspection process is the ability to communicate effectively with food service workers and establishment operators. When communication breaks down staff cannot ensure comprehension regarding the inspection process, determine demonstration of knowledge, or relay information relating to corrective action required to reduce the number of risk factor violations. Inspectors often found communication barriers in food establishments owned and operated by residents who were Limited English Proficient (LEP). Staff would resort to pantomiming or erroneously speaking slower to try to increase comprehension. The resulting frustration on either end of the interaction would damage operator trust in the inspector, as well as lower the level of customer service provided.

In 2012 the Program reevaluated its hiring practices and began to actively recruit a more diverse pool of applicant. Advertised positions for Public Health Specialists would include a preference listed for candidates with a second language skill. Within the last five years, the Program hired bilingual employees with various language backgrounds, including: Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Punjabi, French, and American Sign Language (ASL). Having staff in the field with additional language skills has improved relationships with LEP operators and has increased the trust and comfort level of LEP food service workers during inspections.

In 2013 all Program staff participated in training on language access resources. Detailed written policies and procedures were developed for interactions with LEP clients in the field and in office. The Program began to utilize Language Line Services for over the phone interpretation. Inspectors can utilize the service via speakerphone on their cellular device and obtain interpretation services during an inspection. Additional financial resources have been allocated to ensure interpretation services are available and utilized.

A dual receiver phone was installed near the front desk in the office. When a customer requiring interpretation services is identified, staff escort them to the station, which allows for over the phone interpretation while both participating parties listen on their own headset. This station is also utilized when language barriers are identified during the testing portion of the Food Handler class. Administrative staff utilize the dual receiver telephone to administer each question on the final exam, thus verifying student knowledge regarding proper food handling practices. Due to the high volume of customers to the Environmental Public Health Program, an additional dual receiver station was positioned in the main lobby of the building, and security personnel were trained on its use in order to improve initial customer service response.



In 2016 the Program identified a gap within the offered online Food Handler courses. While online courses were offered in seven additional languages, the required written post-test was only available in English. Utilizing Language Line, the Program was able to translate the post-test for all offered languages. The implementation of the Spanish language written post-test decreased the number of participants who required a retest.

Over the last three years Language Line usage increased 300%. The Program was instrumental in responding to a significant gap in services. The decrease in critical violations has been partially attributed to the increase in interpretation services during food inspections. When proper food handling practices can be relayed in a culturally competent manner, the result is prevention of foodborne illness in Kansas City through a reduction of risk factor violations.

### **Part III: Challenges, Objectives, Measurements, & Achievements**

#### **Implementation of Manager Food Handler Training in Spanish**

The Environmental Public Health Program has taken pride in offering food safety training to the community. The Program began teaching Food Handler courses in 2004. These courses were designed to provide a food service employee with basic food safety training. Almost immediately after the implementation of the Food Handler training class, the Program began to offer the class in Spanish. An interpreter was hired to teach the course prior to bilingual staff hires. Both courses proved successful over the years, with attendance routinely reaching the maximum capacity.

In 2013, the Program began offering online food handler classes. The training online was provided by two different companies and offered in seven different languages. Since the implementation of the online food handler courses, just under 40,000 food handlers have been trained.

Fast forward a few years later. Okay, 11 years later. After a recent survey of stakeholders, results identified there was still a need for the Program to address food safety workers with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). While the Program was offering Spanish Food Handler training classes at the Department once a month (sometimes twice) and offering online training in seven different languages, the results of the survey were somewhat unexpected.

Although the Program offered a certified manager course in English and recognized most nationally accepted certifications, there were no five-year manager courses available in another language in the area. The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce reached out to the Program with requests from the community to create a Spanish Food Managers course. The course would be the first of its kind in the Kansas City Metro Area, and would provide an in depth 5-year certification that would meet Kansas City Food Code food handler requirements. Developing a comprehensive training in Spanish would help provide consistency, structure and continuity for our food safety partners, thus better protecting the health of the citizens and visitors of the City.

The Program responded quickly and applied for an AFDO grant to help offset the cost of translation services. Utilizing Language Line Services, all course materials were translated to Spanish. Currently, the Program is offering the Spanish Managers class on a quarterly basis until there is a demand for increased frequency.

While this training is still new to the Program, performance measures are already in place. Partnering with the six local jurisdictions to have this course recognized as part of the 2012 Food Handler Reciprocity Agreement could mean all Spanish food establishment employees would be able to receive the training needed from Kansas City and still be in compliance with surrounding jurisdictions.

Furthermore, the Program looks forward to compiling useful data (specific to those establishments with managers having taken the Spanish class) to measure success through the reduction of risk factor violations that could potentially lead to foodborne illness.





### Part III: Challenges, Objectives, Measurements, & Achievements

#### Concentrated Education to Reduce Risk Factor Violations

Maximizing efforts to educate operators on the priority of reducing risk factor violations, the Program sought innovative ways to disseminate data. Working off an electronic inspection software allowed data to be easily compiled and analyzed. The question became “How could the Program use data driven practices to produce meaningful tools to improve establishment performance?”. A report was designed in Paragon to tabulate the number of times each critical violation was cited during routine inspections. From the data, a list of the Top 10 Critical Violations was created.

Once the Program had the list of violations, it was determined the data should be put in to a chart and used as an educational tool for establishment operators. Charts were printed on cardstock and designed for inspectors to review with operators during the exit interview following a routine inspection. Using the handout, inspectors had the unique opportunity to compare top violations cited during routine inspections with violations observed during the establishment’s inspection. Inspectors would tailor the exit interview by targeting Top 10 violations and discussing public health significance and preventive measures with operators in order to gain long term compliance.

The data from the Top 10 Critical Violations charts were incorporated into both Food Handler and Food Manager Courses. All participants were educated on proper practices to reduce the occurrence of Top 10 Critical violations. Adjusting the course material to specifically target the most frequently observed critical violations, placed an emphasis reducing risk factor violations to proactively prevent foodborne illness.

When the project began in 2013, the number one cited violation was Food Contact Surfaces Clean to Sight and Touch (*Kansas City Food Code 4-601.11*). The violation was cited during 1,547 routine inspections that year. The Program focused on reduction of this violation through numerous methods. First, by providing operators with additional handouts and focusing discussion during the inspection on the public health significance of the maintaining all food contact surfaces clean to sight and touch kept the operator dedicated to reduction of the violation. Second, being transparent and sharing the cumulative data during the exit interview would improve relations between operators and inspectors.

During the first year of education implementation, the number of food contact clean to sight and touch violations reduced by nearly half. In 2014, the violation was only cited 819 times during routine inspections, dropping in rank from number one to number four. By 2015, the violation was cited 691 times. In 2016, the violation had completely dropped out of the top five cited violations.

The Program is completing more routine inspections annually and has seen a reduction in the total number of violations cited, as well as a reduction in the number one cited violation. While the number one violation is no longer at the top of list, another has taken its place. One that inspectors continue to provide education and training on in hopes that one day the top 10 violations become a minimal cited violations on routine inspections.



## **Part IV: Program Longevity**

With a new year, there are new goals. While there have been successes (PHAB Accreditation, second in the nation to meet FDA Standards, and reduction in risk factor violations), the Program continues to look forward. A primary focus on community outreach has directed the development of future Program goals.

Capitalizing on the success of the Spanish Food Handler and the newly developed Spanish Food Manager course, the Program will again look to enhance our educational offerings:

- Creating in person Food Handler courses in additional languages based on identified community need (Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Arabic are logical next steps);
- Building on the current Food Handler Reciprocity Agreement within the metro area to include courses taught by the Program in additional languages;
- Utilizing data from Language Line to determine additional languages to include in the online Food Handler course selection.

Convenience. We all want it and are becoming accustomed to it.

The Program looks to make services more convenient over the next 1-3 years by implementing:

- A citywide permitting enterprise system that will allow for business owners a one stop shop to receive all permits needed to successfully operate a business in the City;
- Expansion of services in to the northern part of the City to reach customers that live on the far edges of the 319 square miles;
- Social media dashboard that will automate a response when foodborne illness risks are identified by key words.

Staying current on food safety trends and regulations. Being cognitive that someone will have a new idea for food service and understanding the food safety regulations that will be required, the Program will:

- Update the Kansas City Food Code to reflect the newest version of the FDA Food Code;
- Partner with national organizations for knowledge and guidance on food trends throughout the country;
- Reduce risk factor violations not only in Kansas City, Missouri but throughout the metropolitan area through collaboration with surrounding local public health agencies.

While the Program has continued to evolve over the years, one thing has remained constant: commitment to preventing foodborne illness in Kansas City. Increasing visibility of the Program and highlighting the services that we provide will only strengthen the relationship with the community we serve. The Program is cultivating long-term plans to ensure our role in public health is still one to be modeled but more importantly one that is sustainable by providing services to our community that promote health through prevention.

## **Part V: Contact Information**

### **Contact Information**

Naser Jouhari, MIS, Environmental Health Services Division Manager

### **Submitter**

Stacie Duitsman, Environmental Health Services Administrative Officer

### **Organization**

Kansas City, Missouri Health Department

Environmental Public Health Program

2400 Troost Ave. Suite 3200

Kansas City, Missouri 64108

**Phone:** 816-513-6186

**Email:** [stacie.duitsman@kcmo.org](mailto:stacie.duitsman@kcmo.org)

**Website:** [www.kcmo.gov/health](http://www.kcmo.gov/health)

### **Permission**

Kansas City, Missouri Health Department grants permission to the Foodservice Packing Institute to use this entry on its website location at [www.crumbineaward.com](http://www.crumbineaward.com) should it be selected as a winning entry.

### **Contributor**

Carolyn White, MPH, Environmental Public Health Program, Assistant Program Manager





February 23, 2017

The Samuel J. Crumbine Award  
Foodservice Packaging Institute  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046

Re: Crumbine Award Recommendation

To Whom It May Concern,

The City of Kansas City Environmental Public Health Program and StateFoodSafety.com have worked in partnership for several years to train food handlers in Kansas City. Our company has collaborated with the City to provide customized, comprehensive online food safety training that aligns with the City's Food Code. This outreach allows the Environmental Public Health Program to educate food handlers within the City on proper food safety practices.

Our organizations have recently agreed to extend this excellent program for another three years. Offering the fully audial and visual food safety training and testing program in English, Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Serbo-Croatian helps the Kansas City Health Department embrace the diverse cultures within the City with the knowledge they need for proper food handling behavior. With these measures in place, we are taking great strides to reach our goal of ensuring that the City of Kansas City remains a well-educated and safe locality.

Our partnership with the Environmental Public Health Program serves as a safeguard against the spread of foodborne illnesses throughout the City. The City of Kansas City demonstrates a strong desire to keep its citizens and visitors safe from foodborne illnesses through easy access to superior food safety training and testing. Their efforts to protect the public have been exemplary for other locales across the nation.

Sincerely,



**Jeremy Howard**  
Accounts Coordinator  
StateFoodSafety.com



1532 W. Commonwealth Ave. #A  
Fullerton, CA 92833

Phone (800) 676-3121  
Fax (714) 451-0056  
[www.PremierFoodSafety.com](http://www.PremierFoodSafety.com)

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February 17, 2017

The Samuel J. Crumbine Award  
Foodservice Packaging Institute  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046

Re: Crumbine Award Recommendation

To Whom It May Concern,

Premier Food Safety and the Kansas City Environmental Public Health Program collaborate to offer extensive online food safety training to food handlers in Kansas City, Missouri. Together we strive to educate members of the food establishment community about the dangers of foodborne illnesses and the importance of food safety.

To reach our common goal, we at Premier Food Safety, offer training to Kansas City food handlers in a number of languages including Spanish and Chinese. These courses accompany the Environmental Public Health Program's implementation of a Spanish language Food Manager's Class. Our partnership hopes to reduce the language barrier that can cause food safety to lapse in Kansas City.

We believe that the Kansas City Environmental Public Health Program is working diligently to advance the public's knowledge about the seriousness of food safety and how it relates to foodborne illness. The Environmental Public Health Program continues to show the key elements of a high quality food protection program.

Sincerely,

Dirk C. Yoo  
CEO, Premier Food Safety

February 22, 2017

The Crumbine Award  
Foodservice Packaging Institute  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046

Re: Crumbine Award Recommendation

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I submit this letter of recommendation on behalf of the Kansas City Missouri Health Department for the Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award.

While the City of Kansas City has a longstanding partnership with LanguageLine Solutions, the Kansas City Health Department has strengthened that relationship considerably over the last four years. Through over the phone interpretation via Language Line, the Environmental Public Health Program has been able to communicate more effectively with operators during food inspections. The Program has had numerous documents translated, to include the new Spanish Food Manager Course, as well as online Food Handler post-tests in seven additional languages. The Department has shown a nearly 300% increase in Language Line utilization over the last three years, with a significant portion of use coming directly from field inspections and food handler training.

The Kansas City Health Department has shown a commitment to food safety. Their dedication to language access and equitable service is without question. The Program's commitment to food safety and community education is the reason for my letter today. We look forward to many years of successful partnership and remain proud to assist the Program in their efforts.

Sincerely,



Thomas Costello  
Strategic Account Executive  
Language Line Services, Inc.  
(831) 648-5537  
[tcostello@languageLine.com](mailto:tcostello@languageLine.com)



March 1, 2017

The Crumbine Award  
Foodservice Packaging Institute  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046

To whom it may concern;

It is with pleasure that the Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association supports the Kansas City, Missouri, Health Department Environmental Public Health Program's application for the Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award.

The Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association is a member based organization whose mission is to represent, educate and promote the restaurant and hospitality industry in metropolitan Kansas City. Founded in 1916, the Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association has a long history of philanthropy and activism in support of our members, our customers and our community.

We have worked closely with the Kansas City Health Department's Environmental Public Health Program as part of their mission to help ensure the safety of everyone in the Kansas City community, including the development of a Food Handler Training Program that has resulted in a significant decrease in risk factor violations. The Kansas City Health Department provides this training in the native languages most often spoken by local restaurant employees which helps to further reduce the incidence of critical violations. In addition, we are proud to serve on the Food Advisory Board that provides meaningful dialogue and input to the Program from interested businesses and individuals in the Kansas City community. The communication within the board is a great example of how government entities and the community can work together to find solutions that best serve everyone involved.

The Kansas City, Missouri Health Department Environmental Public Health Program has demonstrated creativity, cultural sensitivity and a collaborative spirit in their efforts to fulfill their mission and we highly recommend them for this award.

Sincerely,

William C. Teel

Executive Director  
Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association

Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association  
1417 West 47<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, MO 64112  
816-753-5222 [morerestaurants.com](http://morerestaurants.com)



February 16, 2017

The Samuel J. Crumbine Award  
Foodservice Packaging Institute  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046

Re: Crumbine Award Recommendation

To Whom It May Concern,

The City of Kansas City established a Food Protection Advisory Board on behalf of the Mayor. This Board is entrusted with the task of advising the Director of Health and the Environmental Public Health Program on processes that the Program undertakes and implements. Meetings are held quarterly to discuss every aspect regarding Food Protection in the Program. Emphasizing Food Code regulations, continuing education for staff, food safety training efforts, and recruitment & retention of qualified staff, are all priorities for the Advisory Board.

The Environmental Public Health Program retains the responsibility of food safety in Kansas City, Missouri. The Mayor's Food Advisory Board believes that the Program possess' the dedication and intuitiveness to ensure the highest quality food safety education. We are advocates for the Environmental Public Health Program's drive to continue to be a leader among its peers in food protection, through accreditation, training, and innovation.

On behalf of the entire Food Advisory Board, I recommend the Kansas City Missouri Environmental Public Health Program, for the esteemed Samuel J. Crumbine Award. The Food Advisory Board whole-heartily agrees the Environmental Public Health Program deserves this award for continuing to provide outstanding food protection services to Kansas City and the surround metropolitan area.

Sincerely,



Debbie Brooks

Mayor's Food Advisory Board Chair



To Whom It May Concern

Our Company has been involved in the Development, Hosting and Support of our Environmental Health Inspection system for over 10 years. In that role, we have worked with many Environmental Health Departments across North America, which gives us a unique perspective on how they each perform their duties.

I have personally had the pleasure of working with the Kansas City Environmental Public Health Program (EHPH) since they deployed our Environmental Health Inspection system in 2006.

Over that time, the Kansas City EPHP has repeatedly demonstrated a commitment to food safety and excellence through:

1. Maintaining a collaborative relationship with us to continually assess food safety standards and practices as they pertain to our Inspection system. We consider them a valued partner in helping us to continually improve our application through their suggestions for enhancements.
2. Acting as a very professional and trusted resource that exhibits a deep understanding of food safety guidelines.
3. Making recommendations on innovative ways of using our technology to better address foodborne illness in their community.
4. Making use of our Inspection Database for statistical analysis of risk factor trends. We have worked with them on several occasions in the design of reports to help them to improve effectiveness in reducing foodborne illness and manage Staff.

Over the years, they have demonstrated a dedication to providing the highest quality of Food Safety. Based on my many years of experience with Kansas City EPHP and in the Environmental Health market in general, I would highly recommend them for the Samuel Crumbine Award for Excellence in Food Protection.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Ryan".

Paul Ryan,  
President  
[pryan@paragoncda.com](mailto:pryan@paragoncda.com)  
(905) 886-4816 ext 211

Paragon Bermuda (Canada) Ltd  
25 Sheppard Ave W, Suite 300, Toronto, Ontario M2N 6S6  
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March 3, 2017

The Crumbine Award  
Foodservice Packaging Institute  
201 Park Washington Court  
Falls Church, VA 22046

Re: Crumbine Award Recommendation

To Whom It May Concern,

I have been asked to submit a letter of recommendation on behalf of the Kansas City Missouri Health Department for the Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award. I am honored to do so.

We have a strong partnership with the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department and their Environmental Public Health Program. The program offers many of our students the opportunity to shadow restaurant inspections in the field, allowing our future graduates to take away an on-the-job understanding of practical environmental public health as it pertains to our community. We have also had a number of guest lecturers from the department over the course of many years; they have taught in my Environmental Health class in our accredited Master of Public Health (MPH) degree program. The education and training that our students receive from them provides an excellent introduction to food safety and, we believe, contributes to their success not only as MPH graduates, but also to their contribution to the overall health of the Kansas City metropolitan area.

As the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department is an accredited Health Department, it is reassuring to know that our students and the community are the hands of well qualified professionals. The program's commitment to our safety and the future of our community is the reason for my letter today.

In conclusion, I am pleased to recommend the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department for the Samuel J Crumbine Consumer Protection Award and strongly support their application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'John S. Neuberger'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'N'.

John S. Neuberger, DrPH, MPH, MBA  
Professor