Consumer awareness and perception to food safety hazards in Trinidad, West Indies

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Abstract

Little is known on consumer perception and awareness to food safety in Trinidad, West Indies. A survey was conducted on 121 consumers who handled meat on food safety knowledge and handling practices at homes. Most \( P < 0.01, 83.2\% \) categorised food safety as ‘very’ important. Consumers differed \( P < 0.05 \) in their perception as to the most feared food hazard, *Escherichia coli* (89.7\%) and *Salmonella* (85.7\%) were most known \( P < 0.01 \) of microbial types. Restaurant (55.0\%) was regarded to be the most likely place where food poisoning could occur. There was no distinct \( P > 0.05 \) trust in food safety authorities. Gender had \( P > 0.05 \) no influence on responses. The study highlighted gaps in food safety knowledge and critical violations in food handling.

Keywords: Consumer perceptions; Food hazards; Food handling; Food safety awareness; Trinidad

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