

# **CHANGES IN CONSUMER FOOD SAFETY PRACTICES AT A VETERINARY SCHOOL DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**

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The outbreak of the novel SARS coronavirus 2 has resulted in a global pandemic with various preventative actions being taken to limit its spread. In this cross-sectional study targeting students and staff at a veterinary school, we evaluated how their food safety practices had changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, 95% (102/107) of respondents indicated a change in their shopping habits. The three major changes identified were increased use of hand sanitizers, less visits to the grocery and increased sanitizing of grocery packages. Interestingly, most respondents exhibited confidence in suppliers to provide a safe and reliable source of food. The three main concerns expressed were the health of fellow shoppers, the health of store workers and safety of the food sold. From this study we can conclude that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in consumers most adopting practices aimed at reducing potential viral transmission.

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