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Food safety knowledge, practices and attitudes of fishery workers in Mar del Plata, Argentina

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13 14 15 Abstract

16
17 In order to identify training needs in food handling, the present study evaluates the
18 theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge and attitudes of 221 food handlers working in
19 fishing industries in Mar del Plata, Argentina. A written questionnaire of 45 questions was
20 designed to collect the data on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, food
21 contamination and bacterial growth, high-risk foods, type of hazards, personal hygiene
22 practices, cleaning and disinfection and attitudes towards training on food safety. The
23 results show that the food handlers have acceptable level for theoretical knowledge,
24 practical knowledge and attitudes, with average score of 6.08 ± 2.69 (from a range of 0-10),
25 16.05 ± 2.19 (from a range of 0-20) and 7.28 ± 2.31 (from a range of 0-10), respectively.
26 However, some unawareness was observed regarding to the term cross-contamination, the
27 range of temperature that favors bacterial growth, the recognition of biological hazards, the
28 proper duration of hand-washing and the necessary supplies in a washbasin. The majority
29 of the participants showed a positive attitude towards the importance of training in hygiene
30 practices. The theoretical knowledge level of the respondents showed a significant
31 association with the level of education, the amount of training in food handling and the
32 attitudes. The results reinforce the importance of continuing the training of food handlers
33 by the use of teaching methodologies adapted to their level of education.

34 35 Keywords

36 Food handlers

37 Fishing industry

38 Knowledge

39 Practices

40 Attitudes

41 42 1. Introduction

43
44 Food safety is a constant public health concern in industrialized and developing countries.
45 According to the World Health Organization (2016), food transmits more than 200 diseases
46 and became an important global issue, especially in vulnerable people (infants, pregnant

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