FOOD SAFETY RATING

PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES BY SHARING RESTAURANT INSPECTION RESULTS

www.KingCounty.gov/FoodSafetyRating

THE FOOD SAFETY RATING TIMELINE

2001

King County becomes 1st in the state to post restaurant inspection results online.

2013

Please share food safety information with us!

We want an easier way to get this information!

King County residents ask for more information about restaurant inspections.

2014

Public Health – Seattle & King County hosts meetings to hear from food safety experts and community members about what they want from a rating system.

Use results from more than one inspection...

Show more information than just whether the restaurant passed inspection...

WHAT WE HEARD

2015

The recommendations are used to start to develop a rating system.

Inspection quality and consistency are improved.

2016

Focus groups and an online survey help to:

· define priorities for our restaurant rating system and
· develop a window sign for restaurants that all people can understand.

2017

Starting in 2017, this rating system will be phased in across King County.
WHAT DO THE RATINGS MEAN?
The food safety rating on the restaurant window sign is updated after each routine inspection. It is calculated by averaging the total points of red critical violations of a restaurant’s four most recent routine inspections. Food safety violations are corrected during routine inspection.

WHAT IS A RED CRITICAL VIOLATION?
Those food handling practices that, when not done properly, are most likely to lead to foodborne illnesses.

RATING ON A CURVE
Each restaurant’s average score is compared with other restaurants in the same zip code or area. Within each zip code or area, there will be:

- ~40% GOOD
- ~50% EXCELLENT
- ~10% OKAY

This category is not rated on a curve.

We are using this system because:
- Consumers tend to dine locally
- Restaurants within an area tend to have the same inspector
- It provides accurate and useful information to consumers about how well a restaurant performs compared to restaurants nearby
WHAT ELSE MAKES THE NEW RATING SYSTEM MEANINGFUL?

WE USE RESULTS FROM FOUR INSPECTIONS, NOT ONE

We looked at years of data and determined that the average of four routine inspections most effectively conveys food safety. Restaurants in King County are inspected on average 1-3 times per year.

WE ASKED FOR COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON VARIOUS DESIGNS

Focus groups and an online survey were conducted across King County to gather feedback on multiple design options and community priorities. We worked with residents who speak many languages. The online survey was available in English and seven other languages.

Possible ratings:

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Six window sign designs were presented to focus groups

WE REPORT THE RESULTS IN A WAY FOR ALL PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND

Window signs are easy for everybody to understand regardless of language spoken.

Let’s go eat

Halina’t kumain

Vamos a comer

一起去吃

WINDOW SIGNS TELL US MORE THAN IF A RESTAURANT PASSES OR FAILS

If a restaurant is open, then it meets minimum standards. Consumers want to know more than if a restaurant passes or fails an inspection, restaurant window signs will show how well they perform beyond meeting the minimum standard.
In 2015, we started doing peer-reviewed inspections as part of staff training. Results show that inspections are more reliable and consistent.

Without peer review, each inspector might grade the same establishment differently.

With peer review, our inspectors perform an inspection together, talk through their observations, and learn from each other.