

**INTERNATIONAL  
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**IFPTI Fellowship Cohort IV:  
Research Presentation  
Nicole Kay Berzins, MS Env Sc  
2014-2015**



# *Preparing for the Implementation of a Routine Inspection Program in Colorado*

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## Background

- The State of Colorado's current registration program lacks a state regulatory inspection program.
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) contract inspections and food defense inspections are conducted, covering approximately 25% of the registered firms.
- Illnesses and hospitalizations related to foodborne illness are concerns in Colorado.
  - In 2012, Colorado was involved in 39 of 831 foodborne outbreaks, the 6<sup>th</sup> highest nationally.
- Colorado consumers are driving new trends in food processing.

## Average Annual Rate of Reported Foodborne Outbreaks per 1 million in 2012

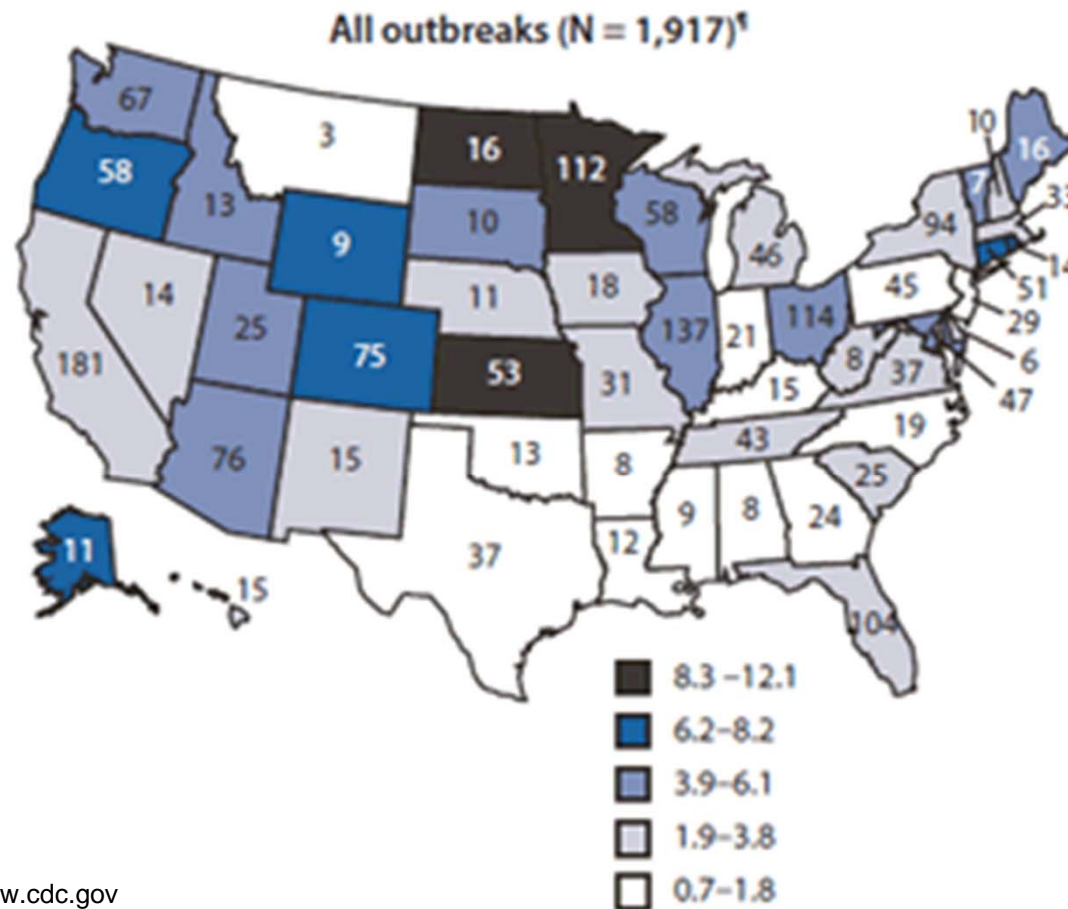
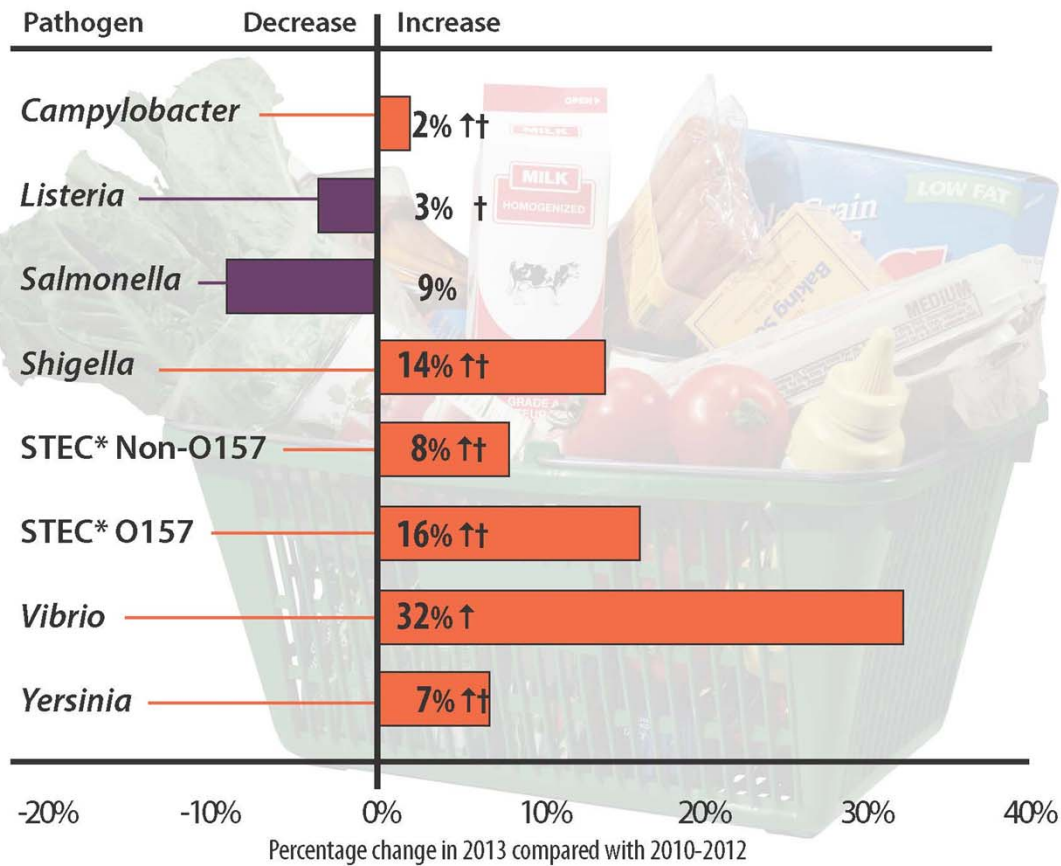


Image Source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

## Changes in incidence of laboratory-confirmed bacterial infections, US, 2013



\* Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*

† Not statistically significant

[www.cdc.gov/foodnet/](http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet/) April 2014

Image Source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



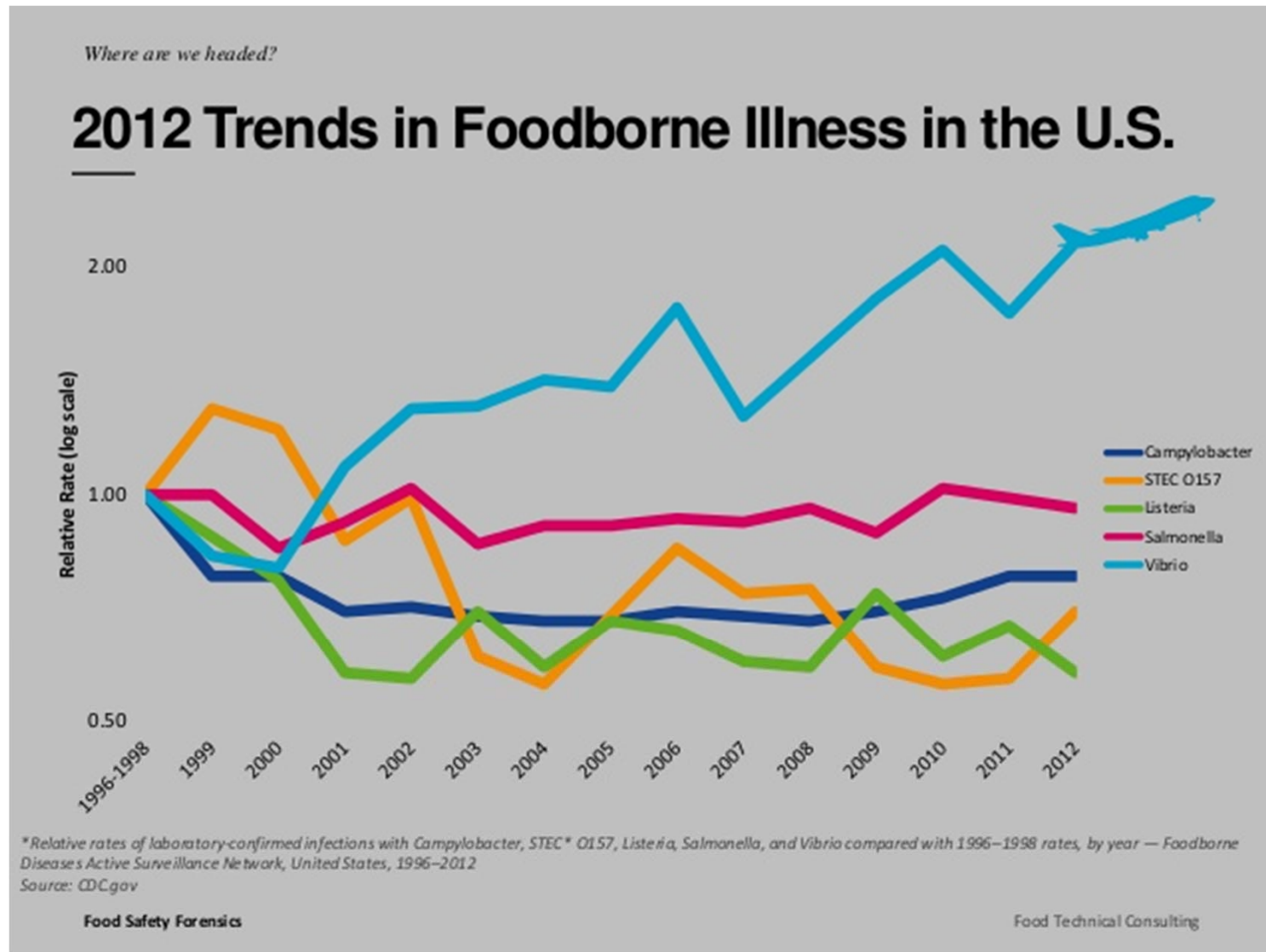


Image Source: Food Technical Consulting (FTC) (Suderman, 2014)

## Problem Statement

- It is not known what type of support wholesale manufacturing firms in Colorado would like a routine state inspection program to provide them.



Image Source: [corporate-compliance-training.blogspot.com](http://corporate-compliance-training.blogspot.com)

## Research Questions

1. How do wholesale manufacturing operators in Colorado obtain information related to food safety requirements?
2. What types of support do wholesale manufacturing operators in Colorado want from state regulatory bodies?



# Methodology

## Industry Perspective

- Two focus groups
  - 12 participants with local county health accessibility.
  - 10 participants with no local county health input.
- Consisted of 45 to 60 minutes of open discussion.
  - Requesting input from operators.

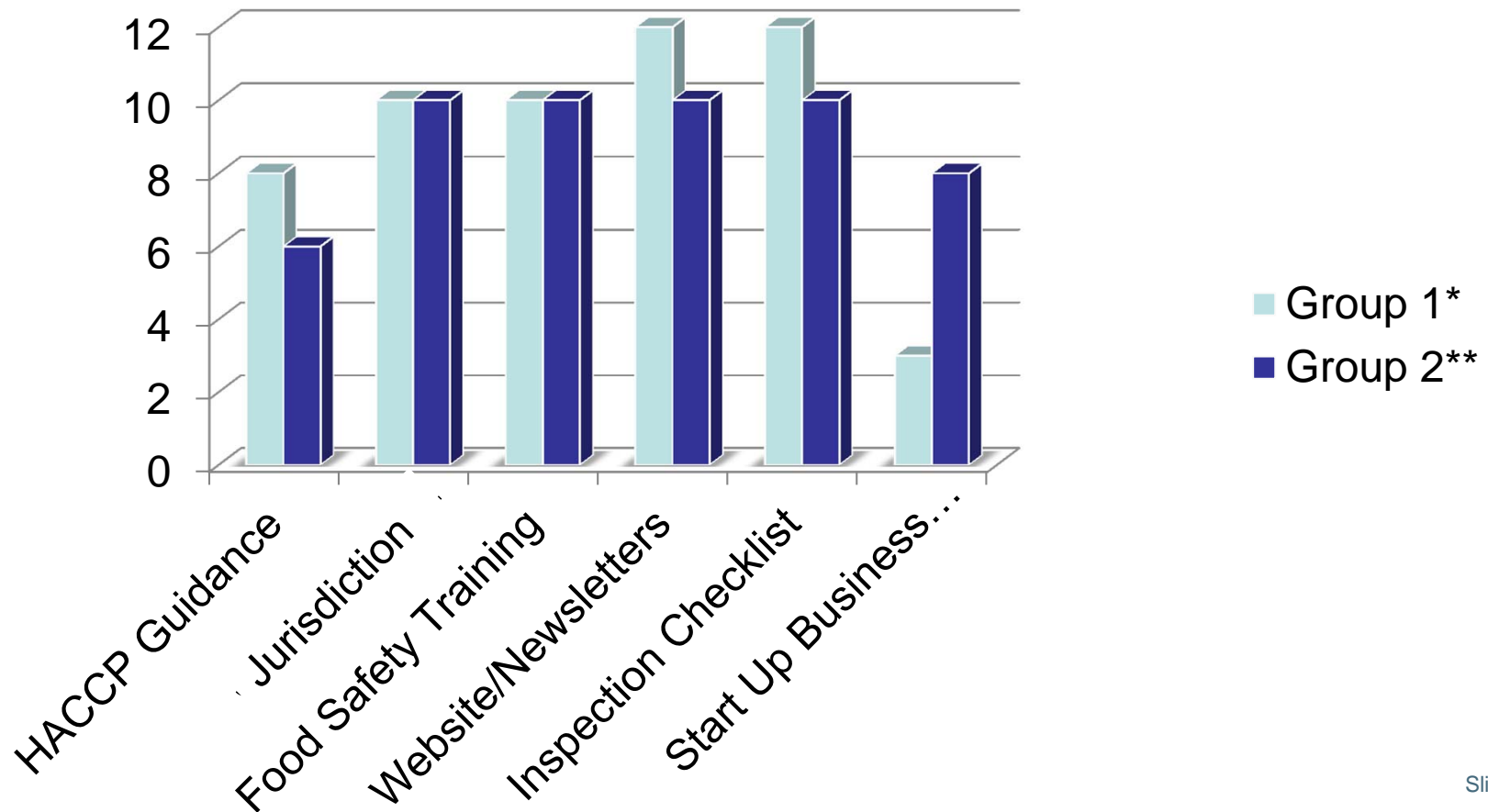
## Study Population

### Colorado Wholesale Food Manufacturers

- Currently registered
- Start-up businesses
- Well-established firms
- Industry interest

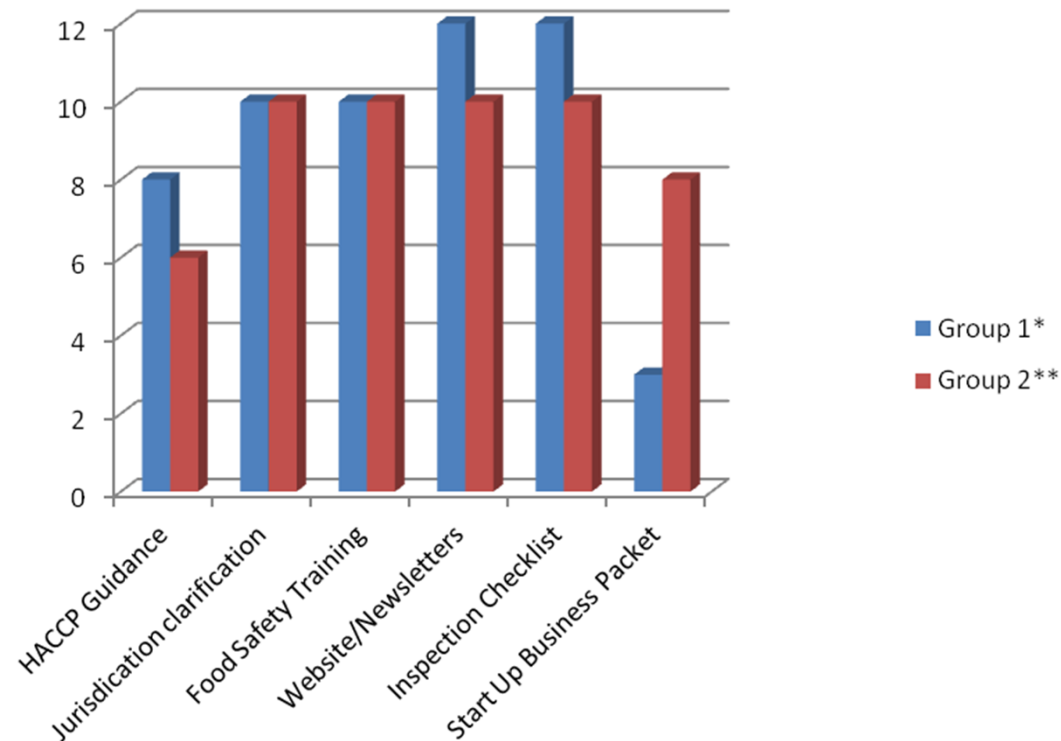
## Results

**Operators were asked what types of support would be most helpful regarding regulatory requirements.**

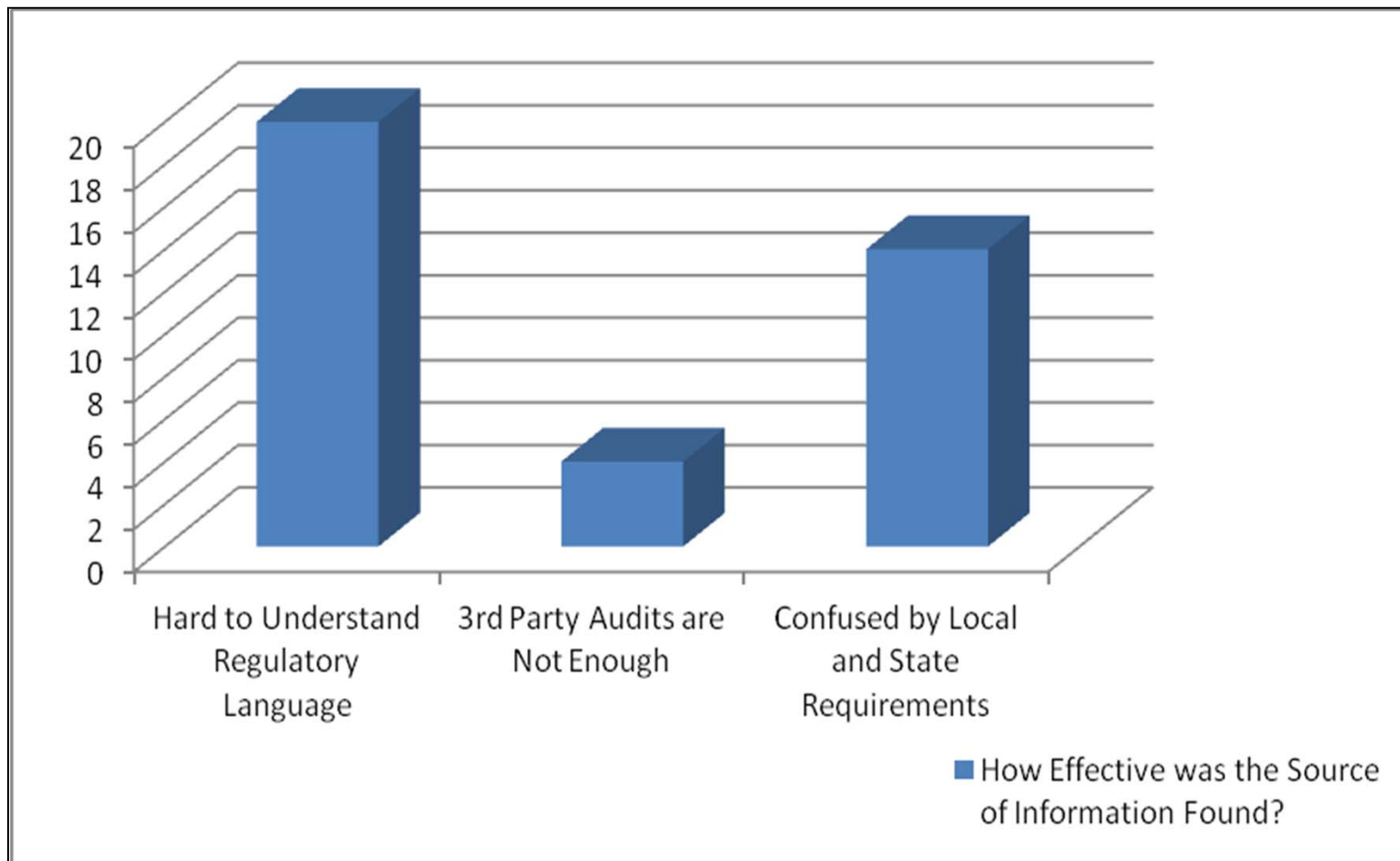


## Support Needed by Focus Group Participants

Operators were asked what types of support would be most helpful regarding regulatory requirements.



## Effectiveness of Food Safety Information Found by Focus Group Participants



## Industry Partners' Response

Overwhelmingly, industry partners' input included:

- A desire for more interactive and direct customer service contact.
- A plan review process prior to business in operation.
- Having an easily understood interpretation of regulations.
- Increased opportunities to participate in trainings.



## State Inspection Program Responses

- State's philosophy in state inspection program is "regulate through education."
- New technology allows for more accessible information:
  - Newsletters
  - Website and media outlets
  - Facebook and Twitter

## Conclusions

- Food safety regulatory information is difficult to understand and often confusing (e.g., there are inconsistencies between state and local regulations).
- Small operations with less experience may be unaware that the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) can provide regulatory assistance.
- Manufacturing operations may be turning to non-regulatory bodies such as other manufacturers and industry for information.
- Operators desire guidance and support from regulatory authorities.

## Recommendations

1. Implement an interactive wholesale food website.
  - Regulatory updates via website, one-on-one with inspectors, firm notification location.
2. Provide outreach pamphlets.
  - Including checklists, Q & A of the regulatory requirement examples, links to guidance documents, e.g., “How to Be Inspection-Ready.”
3. Open lines of communication with other state offices.
4. Implement program information officer who can provide feedback and outreach to industry partners.

## Acknowledgements

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# Questions?

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