

## A Content Analysis of Food Safety Measures on Television's Food Network

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**Abstract:** The popularity of television cooking shows has grown exponentially in the past few years. At the same time, fewer Americans learn how to cook during childhood or high school; therefore, many turn to television cooking shows for cooking lessons. This study aims to determine how well television cooking shows, particularly those on the Food Network, demonstrate food safety measures. In May 2007, a total of 49 episodes from *30 Minute Meals*, *The Essence of Emeril*, *Everyday Italian*, *Paula's Home Cooking*, and *Semi Homemade Cooking with Sandra Lee* were recorded, viewed, and coded for food safety measures. A content analysis revealed a total of 460 poor food handling incidents, compared to 118 positive food safety measures. Most commonly, the shows did not demonstrate washing fruits, vegetables, and herbs properly; a lack of hand washing was also frequently observed.

Although it is extremely difficult to demonstrate every food safety measure in a 30 minute television show, there is a lot of room for improvement, which can also educate the consumer about proper food handling.

**Keywords:** food safety, food safety education, Food Network, television cooking shows, food safety on television.