



Angela Treadaway  
Regional Extension Agent  
News Release

## **Extension Offers ServSafe® Manager Certification Course in July**

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Food Safety Program is pleased to offer "ServSafe®" to restaurant and foodservice organizations in the state of Alabama. According to the Centers for Disease Control, an estimated 5,000 deaths are caused by food-borne illnesses in the United States each year, and the majority are caused by the mishandling of food. The media continues to play a major role in encouraging consumer awareness by exposing unsafe food practices and broadcasting health scores, which are displayed at the establishments. One case of food-borne illness in an establishment can significantly damage an establishment's reputation, causing a loss of customers and sales. This certification program is designed to protect the establishments and keep the customers safe!

ServSafe® is a program accredited by the National Restaurant Association and is the industry standard in food safety. The Food Safety Certification training course offered through the Alabama Cooperative Extension System includes topics such as contamination and food-borne illness; storage, preparation, and serving; and food safety regulations and standards. The program is designed specifically for food-handling employees of restaurants, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, daycares, and other food service professionals. The intensive 10-hour course is spread over three consecutive sessions, ending with the certification exam.

Once certified, managers are issued a ServSafe® certificate which can be displayed at their dining establishments. This certification demonstrates concern for consumer food safety, and also *fulfills state requirements*. Because of changes to the Alabama food code, it is very important to make sure that your restaurant is in compliance with the current laws. Although some counties in Alabama require that foodservice establishments have at least one person on duty at all times with ServSafe certification, it will become a *state-wide requirement by the year 2010*. Check with your local health department for specifics.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System has nine Food Safety, Regional Extension Agents representing each county in Alabama who are trained to teach the course. ServSafe® classes are offered monthly from County Extension Offices, or Extension professionals can come on-site if your company wishes to certify 10 or more employees. The course fee is \$130 per person, which includes the book, examination, and testing materials. For a group of 20 or more employees from the same restaurant or franchise, there is a reduction, at a rate of \$90 per registrant.

While not teaching the course, agents teach food safety to consumers as part of other programs. Hand washing training is also available to local food service organizations as well as food processing companies. This is a service to our counties which is offered at no charge to clients. Agents also answer many food safety questions over the phone.

For more information about ServSafe® Classes, or to register for an upcoming class, you can contact **Angela Treadaway** at (205) 338-9416 or (205) 410-3696-cell or email [atreadaw@aces.edu](mailto:atreadaw@aces.edu). There is a class at St Clair County Extension office being offered July 18-20, 2007 from 1-5pm in the afternoon. **Remember this is a MANDATORY Certification required by the State Department of Public**

**Health. Five points will be deducted from your overall score if you do not have someone certified in this program working in your establishment by the year 2010.**

*Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work in agriculture and home economics, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, and other related acts, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) offers educational programs, materials, and equal opportunity employment to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. Visit our website at [www.aces.edu/StClair](http://www.aces.edu/StClair).*