



Cooking in megabits per second: A content analysis of food safety on YouTube

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Introduction

- Medical professionals recommend home cooking to fight obesity, but home-prepared food comes with risks of microbial pathogens.
- Consumers use YouTube “how-to” videos for informal, on-demand food prep training.

Purpose/Objective

The purpose of this study was to examine the food safety practices demonstrated on popular YouTube cooking demonstration videos and to determine which selected YouTube cooking demonstration channels demonstrate best practices related to food safety.

Methods/Procedures

Five YouTube channels

- Binging with Babish (6.6M subscribers)
- Maangchi (4.3M subscribers)
- Laura in the Kitchen (3.6M subscribers)
- Food Wishes (3.4M subscribers)
- You Suck at Cooking (2.1M subscribers)

50 videos (10 most viewed per channel).
Three coders. Krippendorff's $\alpha = 0.67$

Positive traits

- Refrigeration
- Washing Fruits and Vegetables
- Cleaning Equipment
- Use of a Thermometer
- Washing Hands

Negative traits

- Sampled Food/Licked Fingers
- Cross Contamination
- Unsafe Food Sources
- Touched Face
- Used Food from the Floor

Inter-coded mean scores of individual channels

YouTube Channel	M	SD
Maangchi	.08	.06
Laura in the Kitchen	-.01	.04
Food Wishes	-.03	.01
Binging with Babish	-.04	.04
You Suck at Cooking	-.04	.02

+ .5 indicates Strong + / Weak -
- .5 indicates Weak + / Strong -
0 indicates +/- balance

Conclusion

Food safety cues (+/-) largely absent.

Implication

The narrow distribution of net scores (+.08 to -.04) suggests a general disinterest in discussing food safety.

Recommendations

Independent channels may be difficult to influence.

All channels monetized, creating an opportunity for food safety PSA ad buys.

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