Introduction and Purpose

- In 2015, the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provided 164 million meals and snacks.
- Complex SFSP operational conditions could increase food safety risks:
  - Diverse cooking sites
  - Diverse, including outdoor, service sites
  - Transportation from preparation to serving sites
  - Higher ambient temperatures during meal service hours
- This research examines the effectiveness of current TCS food safety practices in the SFSP.

Methodology

- A total of 28 SFSP sites was observed, four in each USDAFNS region in July and August, 2015 (Fig. 1).
- Practices utilized to control temperatures throughout the day of service were observed.
- Data loggers were utilized to capture the temperature of foods just after preparation through service.

Results

- **Cooking, Cooling, and Thermometer Use Practices**
  - Most Common: checking internal cooking temperatures (68%), and checking end-point cooking temperatures (62%).
  - Least Common: proper cleaning and sanitizing of thermometers (40%), and thermometer: calibration (27%).
- **Transportation and Serving Practices**
  - Most Common: delivering hot meals at proper temperatures (79%), and checking food temperatures at delivery (50%).
  - Least Common: recording food temperatures at delivery (3%), and using refrigerated trucks (16%).
- **Lunch Food Temperatures**
  - Average Time in Temperature Danger Zone
    - Hot Foods < 135°F for 45 minutes
    - Cold Foods > 41°F for 90 minutes
  - Hot foods more often served at the correct temperatures (75%), than cold foods (50%).
  - Only one item did not meet Food Code 2013 requirements.
- **Suggested Training Priorities**
  - **High**: cold food transport and service, checking food temperatures at receiving, thermometer sanitation
  - **Medium High**: thermometer calibration
  - **Medium**: hot food transportation and service, cooking and cooling practices, thermometer to check food temperatures
  - **Lowest**: adequate cooling methods, recording food temperature at receiving (Fig. 2)

Results, Continued

- **Applications**
  - The USDA’s goal to increase the number of meals served in the SFSP requires increasing staff capacity; targeted food safety training is needed. Based on the findings of this study training should focused on:
    - Delivery and service of cold foods; they are particularly vulnerable to higher temperatures.
    - Monitoring and recording food temperatures at receiving.
    - Thermometer cleaning, sanitizing, and calibration.