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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cooperative Extension offers classes in food safety for restaurants and all food servers

The University of Delaware Cooperative Extension will hold several sessions of ServSafe® and Delaware Dine Safe in the fall of 2009 in each of Cooperative Extension County offices.

Food safety in a food service establishment is non-negotiable; each year, an estimated 6 to 12 million Americans contract a food-borne illness as a result of micro-organism contamination. These illnesses are preventable. Proper training is the key to preparing food in a safe environment.

Dr. Anne Camasso, family and consumer science educator for Sussex Cooperative Extension teaches the ServSafe® and Dine Safe classes at the Elbert N. & Ann V. Carvel Research and Education Center in Georgetown. Camasso said employee instruction in food safety practices is not only vital, but makes good business sense.

“With all the information about food borne illnesses in the news today people want to make sure they get the best for their money, restaurants who can demonstrate that they have done all in their power to provide safe, as well as tasty food, have a better chance of bringing in the business.” Camasso said. “If someone from your restaurant takes either of these classes, post a copy of their certificate in your facility so show your patrons that you care.”

The ServSafe® program is the premiere food safety certification offered by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF). The program is designed for the food-service professional.

A ServSafe® certificate from the NRAEF will be awarded to individuals who complete the course and receive a passing grade on the exam. Instructors are registered ServSafe® instructors with the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. The cost of \$145 for the course covers the training, textbook, lunch, and certification examination from the NRAEF. A reduced course fee of \$125 is available for three or more registrants from one establishment.

In addition to ServSafe®, Delaware Cooperative Extension offers Delaware Dine Safe - a three hour short course session designed to focus on the basic principles of food safety and handling. Each participant receives a training guide with the information covered in the program. The instructor will use presentations and hands-on activities to reinforce the lessons taught. All participants will receive a certificate of participation.

The Dine Safe training concentrates on five food service topics: Food Safety; Ensuring Proper Personal Hygiene; Purchasing, Receiving and Storing Foods; Preparing Cooking and Serving Food; and Cleaning and Sanitizing. The Dine Safe short course is \$25. Dine Safe can be scheduled at a business location provided there are at least 10 employees enrolled.

It is the policy of the Delaware Cooperative Extension System that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, disability, age or national origin.

Below is information about each county's course schedule and contact numbers:

Sussex County: ServSafe® will be taught on Sept.22, 2009. Each class is from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dine Safe is offered on Sept. 10. Each class runs from 1-4 p.m. In Sussex, registration forms for both classes are available by visiting: www.rec.udel.edu and selecting either program for the full brochure. For more information contact: Sussex County – 302-856-2585 ext 544.

Kent County: ServSafe® will be taught on Sept. 10 (Spanish only) and Oct. 22. Each class is from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dine Safe is offered on Oct. 6 (Spanish only), and Nov. 9, 2009. Each Dine Safe class runs from 1-4 p.m. For more information contact: 1-302-730-4000.

New Castle County: ServSafe® will be taught on Nov. 11, 2009. Each class is from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dine Safe is offered on Sept. 23 (9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) and Oct. 22, 2009 (1-4 p.m.). For more information contact: 302-831-1239.