

ECOSURE™

GOLDEN CHICK

Reducing critical health department violations with introduction of EcoSure program

A Texas-based brand specializing in offering a wide variety of chicken and chicken tenders, side dishes, fresh baked rolls, and fresh brewed tea at their 220+ locations, Golden Chick is one of the fastest growing restaurant chains in the US. To protect their growing brand, the enterprise forged a partnership with EcoSure, rolling out an organization-wide assessment program in 2022. As a result, **the enterprise saw a remarkable reduction in average critical health department violations over a period of just two years.** Let's explore how we got to this success.

When Brian Loescher took over as President of the Golden Franchising Corporation, the "life-long fast-food guy" knew he wanted to implement a third-party food safety and brand standard program for the chain. Having seen the benefit of such an offering in other roles, he knew it could mitigate risk and improve results. After using an internal audit program for many years, Golden Chick turned to EcoSure to discuss an evaluation program.

In 2021, Golden Chick and the EcoSure team began a pilot program at their thirty company-owned locations. This allowed the Golden Chick team to see the EcoSure assessment process and develop tools, expectations, and communications for a systemwide rollout the following year.

There was hesitation from the franchise community early on. "We have franchisees who have been doing this for 30-40 years and did not really see the need. They always got good scores on health inspections," Loescher said, but he saw this as an opportunity for a third-party program to drive a culture shift by removing the "us vs. them" mentality



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PROGRAM TIMELINE

- 2021 | Pilot program begins
- 2022 | Enterprise rollout
- 2023+ | HDI results improve

of the audits completed by the corporate team. Loescher knew the EcoSure program would allow the whole Golden Chick team to learn together and win together.

As the program rolled out to the entire chain, the first full cycle was an unscored training opportunity for the locations. This gave all managers a solid baseline of understanding to start the program. The EcoSure partnership approach of teaching and coaching allowed the restaurant managers to understand how to address findings and to prepare for future EcoSure visits and health department inspections. Once the scored evaluations started, Loescher said "every week we had a tip go out which really heightened our awareness and helped our scores grow quickly. The goal here is improvement, consistent improvement, so we continue to raise the bar." Every cycle, the passing threshold was increased by leadership and every cycle the average scores improved.

The Golden Chick team took the results and internal feedback from the evaluation program to roll out process improvements from a corporate level too. One such example was the introduction of the Ecolab Prep-N-Print food labeling system. Loescher said, "It is a huge win from a consistency across the brand standpoint, a productivity standpoint, and a time management standpoint. The franchisees love the tool. The internal employee satisfaction is a huge win."

While questions came from the franchisees at the start, Brian Loescher is hearing positive feedback now: "I have even had some of our long-time franchisees say 'Hey Brian, I was not really a fan of this program when it first started, but I am a fan now. I know there is more consistency in my restaurant.'" Loescher also said, "I think the EcoSure program is great. It helps us with overall consistency from day to day. I think it has been a huge win for us organizationally, just from a cultural aspect. There is a lot of internal competition. We have a group chat with all our District Directors on it and they are announcing their scores and there is a lot of pride."

After two full years of a systemwide evaluation program, **Golden Chick continues to see scores improve on the EcoSure evaluations and a reduction in average Health Department critical violations.** The locations are no longer just playing the game to score well on the evaluations, habits have changed. With the aid of an EcoSure program, Golden Chick delivers on guest satisfaction. Loescher says, "Our guests are giving us credit as a trusted brand. While the chicken and the people are the highlight, having a clean, safe restaurant is table stakes."



Thanks to the implementation of an EcoSure program, "we feel like there is less of a risk out there in our chain"

-Brian Loescher, President, Golden Franchising Corporation

ECOSURE PROGRAM BENEFITS

- **Reinforce best practices at your locations**
- **Mitigate risks in food safety and public health**
- **Ensure delighted guests and protected brand reputation**

Learn how an EcoSure program can help your organization.

Contact your EcoSure representative:

- ▶ **email:** ecosure@ecolab.com
- ▶ **visit:** ecolab.com/ecosure