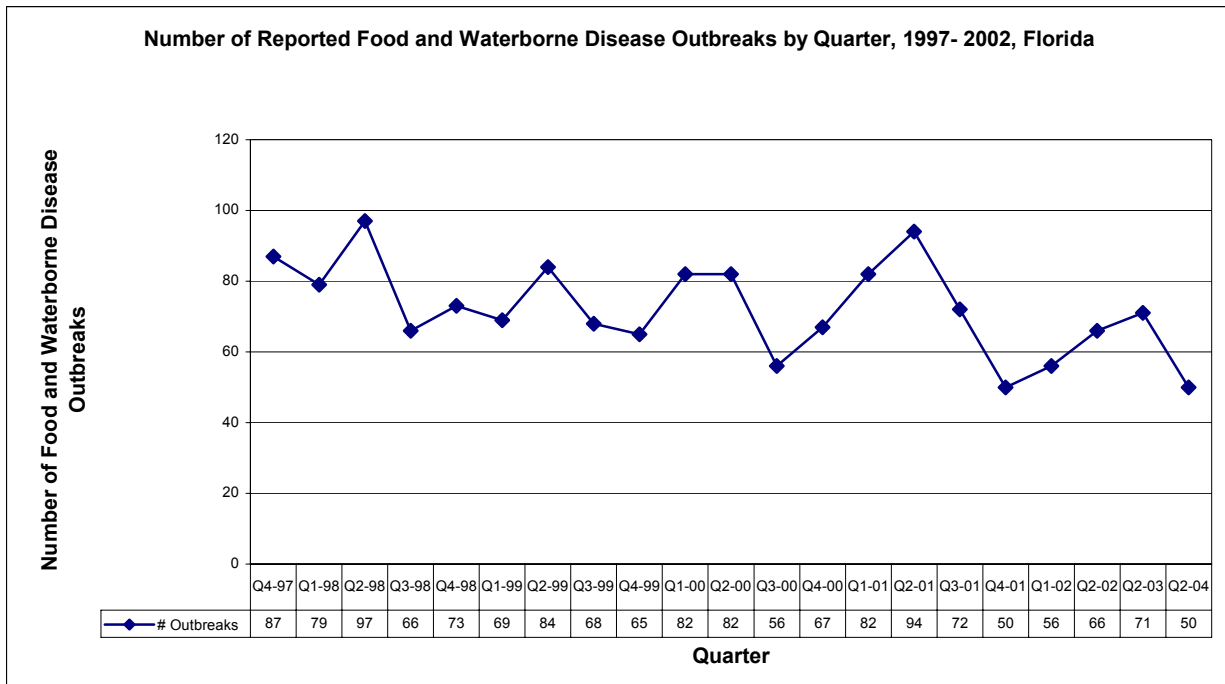
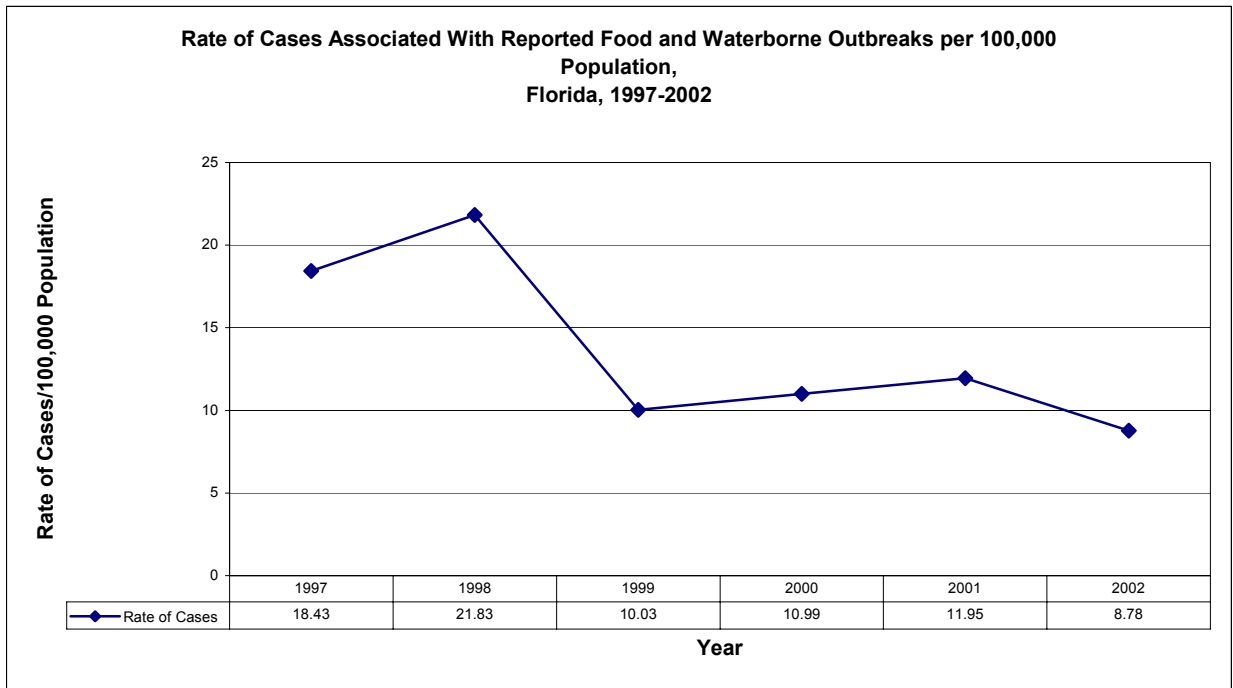


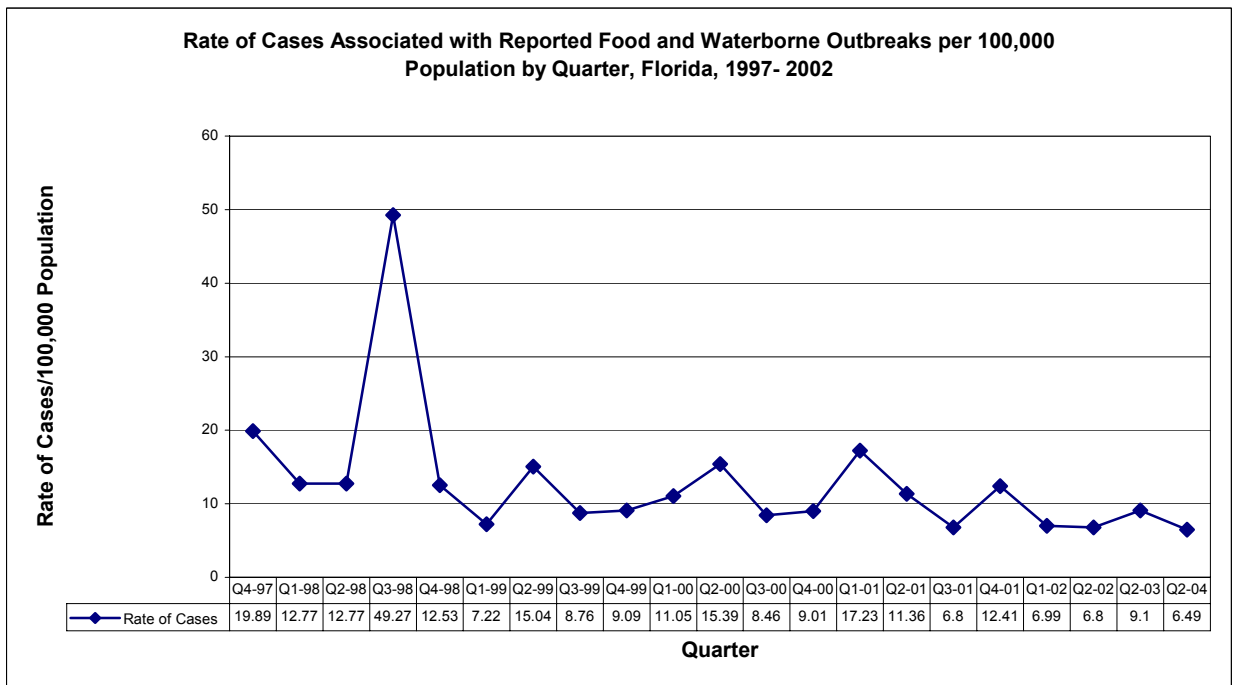
The number of food and waterborne disease outbreaks reported in Florida averages about 300 per year. In 1997, the increase was due to a larger number of smaller outbreaks (less than 10 cases per outbreak) that were reported that year. From 1997-2000, it appears that there is a slight positive downward trend. The Food and Waterborne Disease Epidemiology Team in the Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology promotes prevention of food and waterborne disease through education of the public and health care professionals, and training of CHD staff in food safety and sanitation, along with personal hygiene, particularly handwashing.



The number of food and waterborne disease outbreaks fluctuates by quarter. There does not appear to be any specific reason for quarterly or seasonal variation in outbreak occurrence.



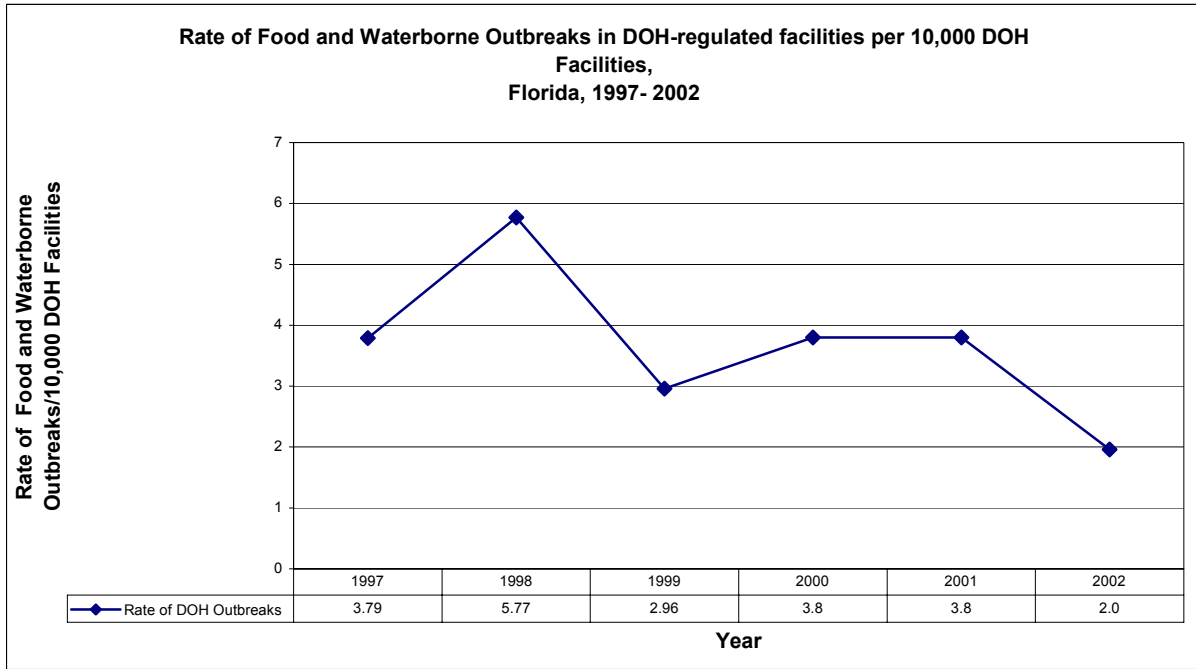
Examining the number of food and waterborne disease outbreaks does not tell the whole story, however. This quarterly performance measure looks at the rate of cases (individuals) associated with food and waterborne disease outbreaks per 100,000 population. From 1997-2000, this figure averages about 14.6. The last two years, it has been 10. Since 1997, it has decreased from 18.43 to 8.78 in 2002. Fluctuations can be accounted for in population fluctuations (if the denominator, population, increases, the rate will decrease), or fluctuations in numbers of cases (if the number of cases decreases, the number will decrease).



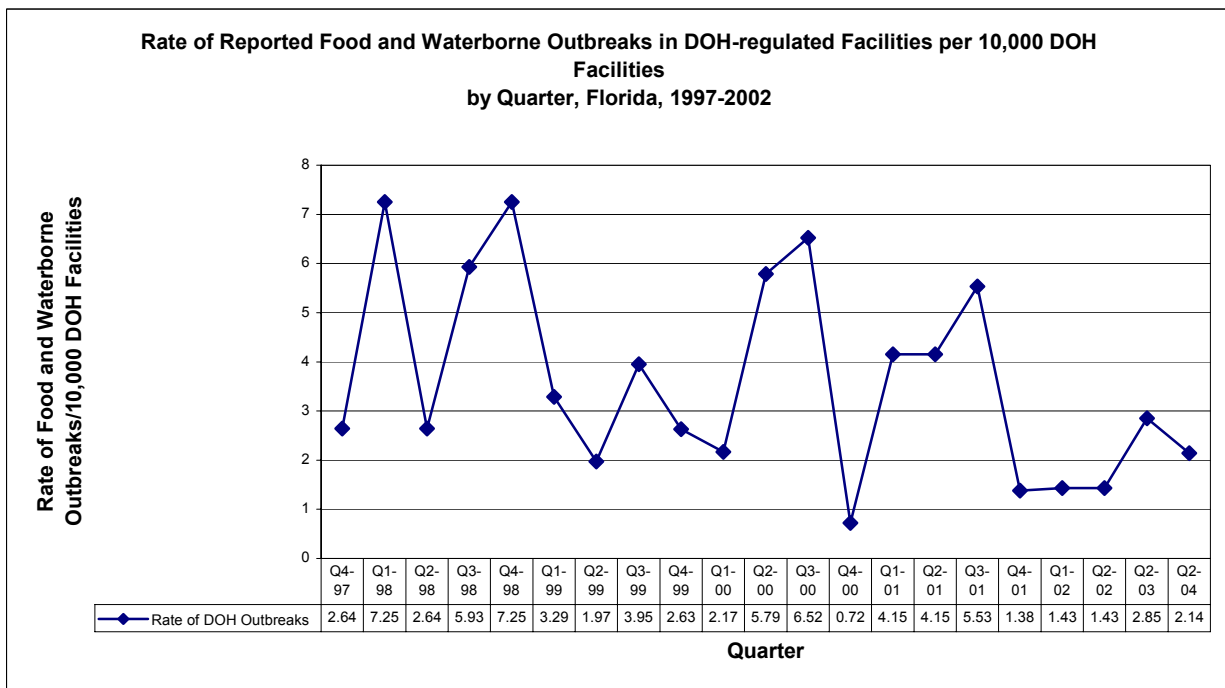
The rate of cases per 100,000 population by quarter remains fairly stable by quarter, between 8-20 per 100,000 population, with the exception of the third quarter 1998 (July-September). Three large outbreaks were reported during this quarter: the Hillsborough County School burrito outbreak (linked to similar outbreaks in other states) with 644 cases, an outbreak at a restaurant in Palm Beach County with 429 cases (causative agent unknown, vehicle unknown, despite a thorough and extensive investigation) and an outbreak in a Miami-Dade County restaurant of 270 cases (causative agent, Norwalk; vehicle, fresh fruit).

Source: Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology
 February 18, 2003

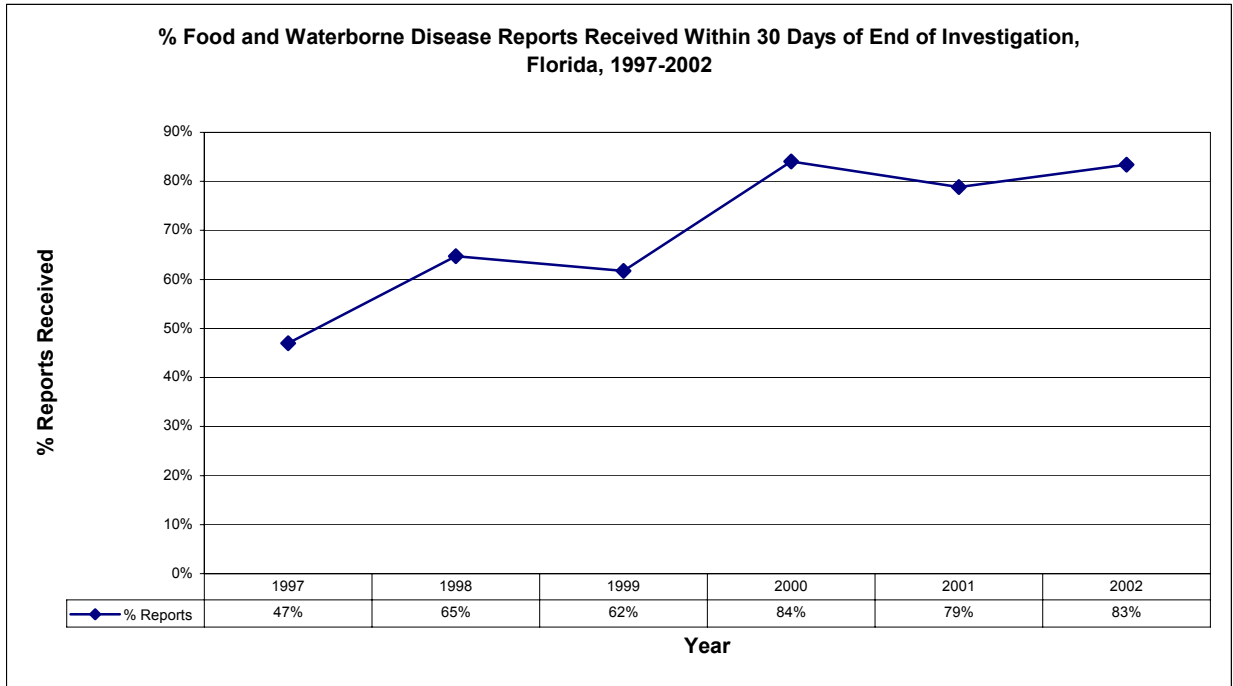
Note: Data is gathered by calendar year.



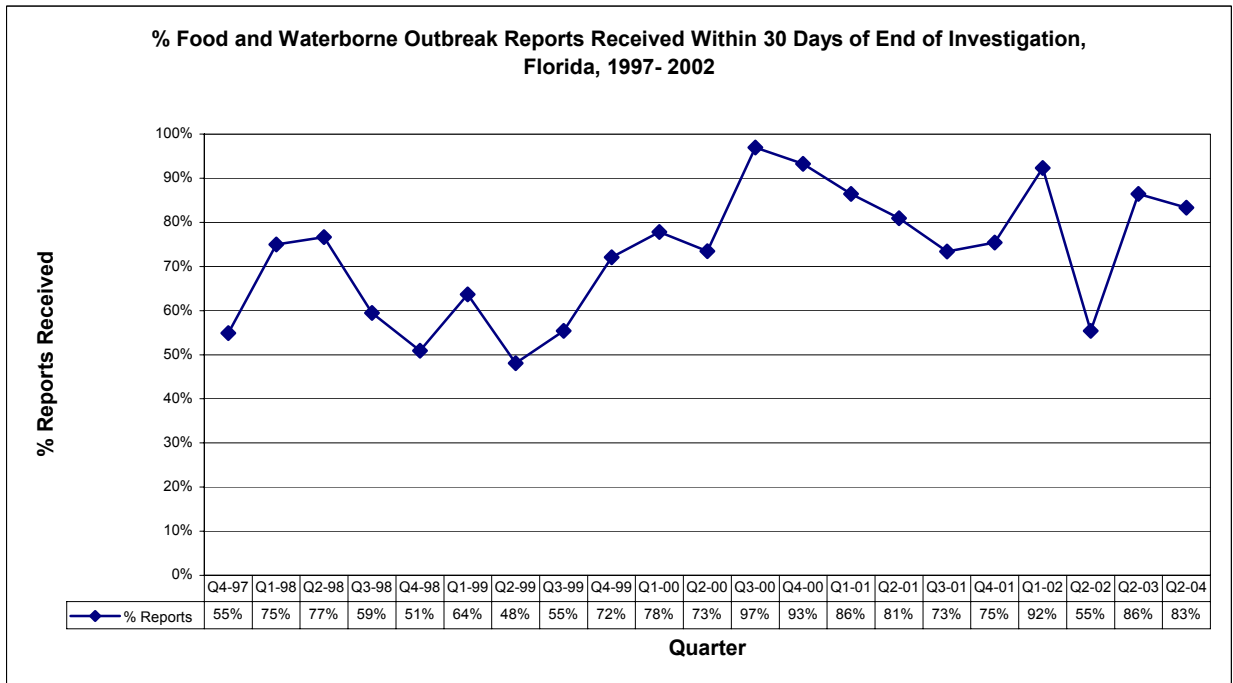
The rate of DOH-associated food and waterborne disease outbreaks per 10,000 DOH-regulated facilities has fluctuated between 2.96 – 5.77 since 1997. An increase in the denominator (number of DOH facilities with food or water: institutions, wells, water systems, pools, spas) can account for a decrease in the rate. However, through YTD 2001, it appears that there is a positive downward trend. A decrease in the number of outbreaks in DOH-regulated facilities can account for a decrease in the rate. In 2002, the rate is 2, somewhat lower than previous years. The Food and Waterborne Disease Epidemiology Team in the Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology and the Bureau of Facility Programs promote prevention of food and waterborne disease through education of the public and health care professionals, and training of CHD staff in food safety and sanitation, along with personal hygiene, particularly handwashing.



The rate of outbreaks in DOH-regulated facilities per 10,000 facilities appears to fluctuate dramatically by quarter, becoming much lower in the last quarter of 2000 and the first two quarters of 2001. Despite the quarterly fluctuations in 2002, the annual trend shows a decrease in the rate.



Prior to 1994, and the current food and waterborne disease program in the Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology, food and waterborne disease outbreaks were not systematically documented. Through an interagency agreement with the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, all outbreaks are required to have a final summary report written within 30 days of the end of the investigation. This measure has showed a marked improvement (positive upward trend) since 1997, from 47% to 84% in 2000. In 2002, the measure is 83% a slight improvement over 2001.



The percent reports received within 30 days, by quarter, appears to show a positive upward trend with some fluctuations. The percentage was above 90% for the previous 4 quarters with a steep drop for the 2nd quarter of the year. However, this does not affect the 2002 trend which shows a positive increase.