



# THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

City Hall  
New York, NY 10007  
(212) 788-7116

**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

March 7, 2012

Contact: 212-788-7116  
Release# 0XX-2012

## MAJORITY OF RESTAURANT INSPECTION SURVEY PARTICIPANTS RECEIVED A GRADES AND STILL RATED THE SYSTEM POORLY

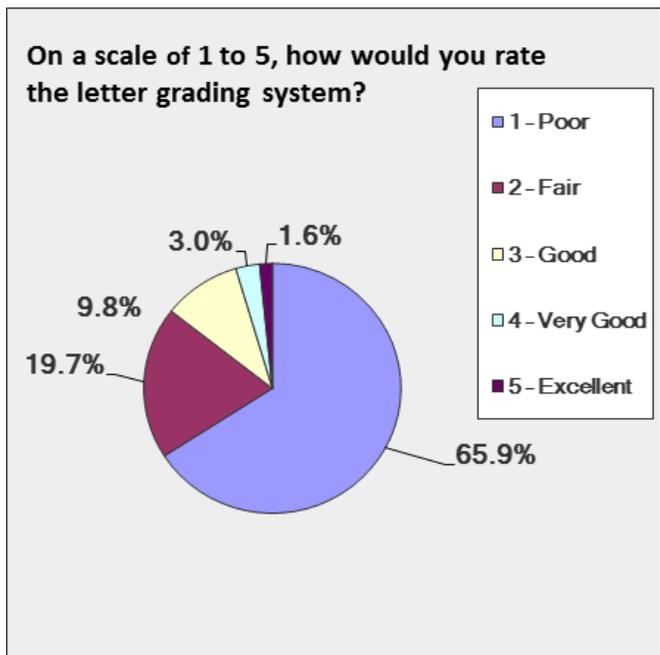
*Survey results reveal a lack of consistency, fairness and a steep increase in fines.*

*Council to hold joint oversight hearing to address concerns raised by restaurateurs.*

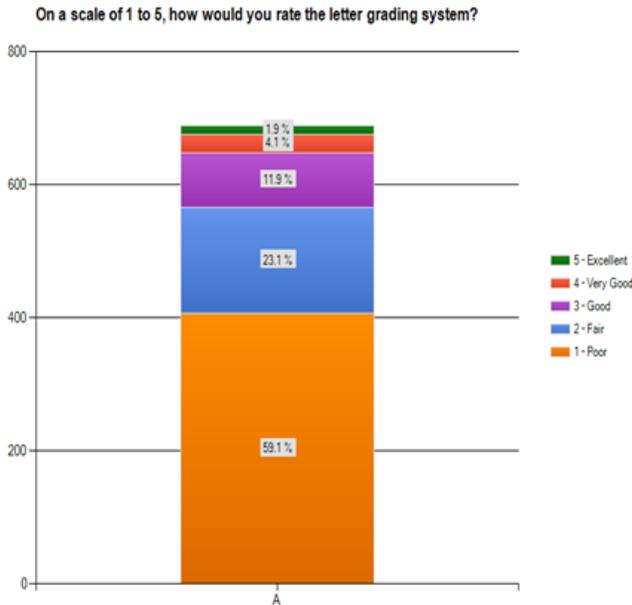
**New York, NY** – The City Council received 1,297 Restaurant Inspection Survey responses following its January 10, 2012 release by Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn and Health Committee Chair Maria del Carmen Arroyo. The survey was launched by Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn and Oversight & Investigations Chair Jumaane D. Williams as part of the Council’s oversight of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and in response to growing concerns raised by restaurateurs regarding the restaurant inspection process.

Survey participants represent all five boroughs from different types of eateries, both large and small, grossing an array of annual sales. Here are some of the key findings:

- The majority (67%) of survey participants received A’s on their health inspection, which is consistent with DOHMH data on grades.
- The majority (65.9%) of survey participants rated the City’s letter grading system as “poor.”
- The majority (68%) of survey respondents said the letter grading system has increased the cost of operating a food service establishment significantly.



## Viewpoint Of “A” Restaurants



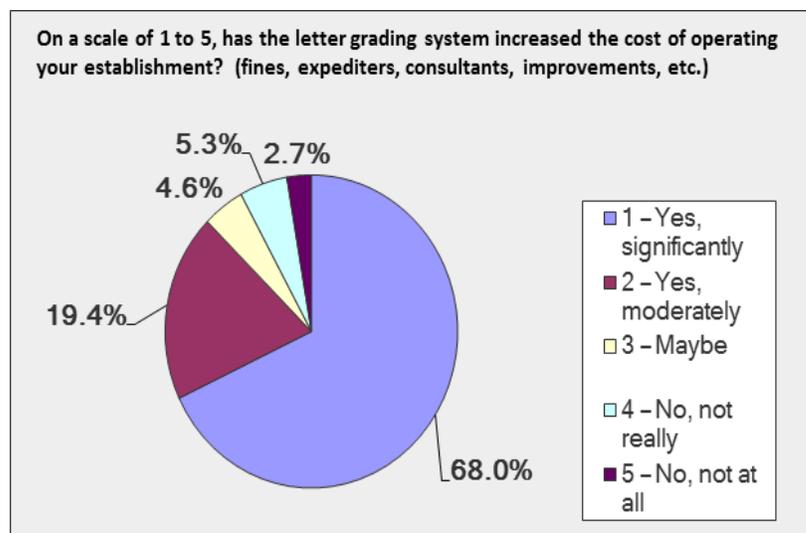
“The Council's survey results indicate the restaurant inspection process is an unfair and inconsistent experience for restaurant owners. Why, if the majority of restaurants are getting A’s, are average violation points increasing? Why are fines rising? We can protect public health without harming businesses,” said **Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn**. “We thank restaurateurs for providing so much real information and data to better inform the Council and the public. We look forward to a thoughtful examination of the restaurant inspection process that will keep New York City the culinary capital of the world.”

“I want to thank all who took the time to respond to the survey. The much anticipated results will help us frame the discussion

regarding the work we need to do to ensure the inspection process is fair and consistent, while ensuring the safety of our city’s restaurants. To that end, I look forward to working with Speaker Quinn, DOHMH and the restaurant industry to introduce much needed reform,” said **Health Committee Chair Maria del Carmen Arroyo**.

“It is important, especially in these times of economic insecurity, that the City is doing its job effectively and without causing undue burden on business,” said **Small Business Chair Diana Reyna**. “Unfortunately, restaurants across the city have overwhelmingly declared our current inspection system as inconsistent and costly. The City Council and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene must acknowledge this growing sentiment and make a concerted effort to guarantee that our restaurants are regulated in a safe, sensible, and efficient manner.”

“The tremendous response to the Council’s online restaurant survey is indicative of the myriad of opinions restaurateurs have about the new grading system,” said **Governmental Operations Chair Gale A. Brewer**. “I encourage all city restaurant operators to continue to share opinions about how best to improve the grading process. We need to be sure we have a grading system that is fair, both to the public who frequent our



city's restaurants, and also to the operators themselves.”

“The Oversight and Investigations Committee has put in a tremendous effort to execute this citywide survey. The Council now has a wealth of information that we can put to use in proposing common-sense reforms to the restaurant grading system. We must ensure that inspection standards are consistent and that small businesses are treated with respect,” said **Oversight and Investigations Chair Jumaane Williams**.

In July 2010, DOHMH began requiring food service establishments to post letter grades corresponding with scores reflecting sanitary inspections during which restaurants receive points for violations. An inspection score of 0-13 violation points is an A, 14-27 violation points is a B, and 28 or more violation points is a C. Grade cards are meant to be clearly visible to the public.

For complete survey results, please visit [www.council.nyc.gov](http://www.council.nyc.gov).

###