

Study reveals FAPC's 10-year economic impact

By Ruth Bobbitt

FAPC Communications Graduate Assistant

STILLWATER, Okla. – A study conducted by the Food & Agricultural Products Center on the campus of Oklahoma State University shows the center has had significant economic impact in the state of Oklahoma.

“The FAPC opened for business in January 1997 and has assisted more than 1,000 Oklahoma clients through 3,000 technical and business projects,” said Rodney Holcomb, FAPC Agribusiness Specialist. “This study was conducted to quantify the statewide impacts of these efforts.”

Holcomb said the study surveyed FAPC clients to assess the changes in employment and sales these clients attribute to FAPC assistance. In addition, respondents were asked to provide an assessment of the value they associate with various services and workshops offered by FAPC.

In 2006, the 343 responding businesses had total sales exceeding \$1.9 billion and provided around 8,700 full-time and 325 part-time jobs for Oklahomans. The combined direct, indirect and induced economic contributions of these companies through other local businesses such as the service and transportation industries were more than \$6.3 billion generated and 52,000 jobs.

Several respondents also provided information about business operations before and after receiving assistance from FAPC. The study indicated 2.1 percent of these companies' full-time positions and 1.5 percent of part-time positions were created between the time the firms received assistance from FAPC and 2006. In that time, companies providing sales information experienced 16.95 percent sales growth. Of these job and sales increases, the firms attributed 157 total jobs and almost \$93 million in sales directly to FAPC assistance. The direct, indirect and induced impacts these companies directly attributed to FAPC assistance were \$308 million and 800 jobs.

“Lawmakers such as the late Sen. Robert M. Kerr, who helped create the FAPC, hoped that the tax dollars spent on the Center would reap benefits for the state, Holcomb said. “It's good to have affirmation that the state funds supporting FAPC have generated exceptional returns for Oklahoma.”

The FAPC is a 96,000-square-foot stand-alone building that houses animal harvesting, food manufacturing, grain milling, sensory profiling, food microbiology and analytical laboratory facilities, as well as conference facilities and applications laboratories for demonstration and prototype testing.

By offering large and small businesses, producers and entrepreneurs access to faculty and staff with expertise in business and technical disciplines, the FAPC strives to discover,

develop and deliver information that will stimulate and support the growth of value-added food and agricultural products and processing in Oklahoma.

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