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FAPC Industry Advisory Committee announces new officers

(June 15, 2009 Stillwater, Okla.) The Industry Advisory Committee of the Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center on the campus of Oklahoma State University met recently at the FAPC to discuss food and agricultural issues and elect new officers.

“The Industry Advisory Committee offers counsel, makes decisions and takes leadership action to ensure the FAPC makes sound short- and long-term plans to accomplish its mission and objectives,” said J. Roy Escoubas, FAPC director.

Committee members elected John Williams, David Howard and Paul Schatte to serve as chair, vice chair and secretary/treasurer of the committee, respectively.

Williams is the president and owner of Chef’s Requested Foods in Oklahoma City, a leading processor of premium beef and chicken products and the No. 1 brand for bacon wrapped filets. Williams received both his bachelor and master’s degrees in agricultural economics from North Dakota State University.

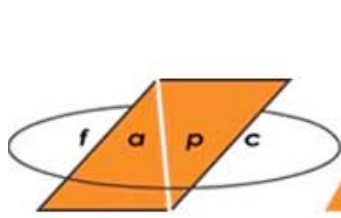
Howard, president and owner of Unitherm Food Systems in Bristow, Okla., was born in England and raised in Northern Ireland. Unitherm Food Systems is a market leader in innovative equipment technologies for pasteurization, cooking and chilling of raw, partially cooked and fully cooked food products and agricultural food commodities.

Schatte, a graduate of Oklahoma State University with a master’s degree in education administration, is the general manager and co-owner for Head Country Bar-B-Q in Ponca City, Okla. Head Country is known for its No. 1 selling barbecue sauce in Oklahoma, but it also produces seasoning, salsa and marinade.

The FAPC has the privilege of oversight by this committee of Oklahoma agricultural and business leaders, appointed by the highest positions of Oklahoma state government, Escoubas said.

“Through the visionary leadership of certain state representatives and senators, such as Sens. Bruce Price, Paul Muegge and Bob Kerr and Rep. M.C. Leist, State Statute 2-5-60 was established in 1997 to provide an advisory committee for the FAPC,” Escoubas said.

During the meeting, the committee members participated in a demonstration by Jake Nelson, FAPC value-added meat processing specialist, of the SuspenTec® system manufactured by Cozzini Inc. The process involved mixing a brine solution with lower cost materials, such as meat trimmings, and injecting the mix into more costly whole muscle products to add value to the products while lowering the cost of the finished goods.



In addition, Jeff Reasor, president of Reasor Foods, led a discussion about innovation in the retail food industry. One of the main topics of the discussion was the effect of the economic recession.

“We have weeks when we are down in sales and weeks when we are up in sales, but we really can’t pinpoint the reason,” Reasor said. “I suspect maybe it’s from the recession; but overall, we haven’t been affected by the recession.”

Reasor told the committee that he thinks everyone involved in the food industry has the same goal in mind for serving customers.

“I think we are all on the same side of the fence,” Reasor said. “We all have the same kind of customers; our perspectives are just different.”

The final presentation of the day included information about carbon footprint by Dani Bellmer, FAPC food engineer, and Rodney Holcomb, FAPC agricultural economist.

In addition to Williams, Howard and Schatte, members of the committee include John Griffin, Griffin Foods; Danny Dupree, Bar-S Food Co.; Bill Wiley, Oklahoma Refrigerated Services; Tommy Kramer, Durant Economic Development Authority; Jill Stichler, Redland Juice Co.; Gary Crane, Ralph’s Packing Co.; Rodger Kerr, Southwest Technology Center; David McLaughlin, Advance Food Co.; Jay Cowart, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association; Gary Conkling, Producers Cooperative Oil Mill; Charles Nichols, Davison & Sons Cattle Co.; and Virgil Jurgensmeyer, J-M Farms.

The governor, the speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Oklahoma Senate each appoint four members to the FAPC Industry Advisory Committee. The vice president, dean and director of OSU’s Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources serves as a non-voting member and also appoints three members to the committee.

The positions that are required by state statute include national food processors operating in Oklahoma, Oklahoma food processors, Made-In-Oklahoma representatives, economic development representatives and representatives from the food and agribusiness marketing and transportation sectors. Also, included are a representative for the fiber and textile industry, representatives for the industrial and pharmaceutical sectors and representatives of production agriculture.

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