

FAPC Receives \$200,000 Grant

STILLWATER, Okla. – The Food & Agricultural Products Center at Oklahoma State University was awarded a \$200,000 grant from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

The FAPC grant was a portion of nearly \$2 million approved by the State Regents for projects and programs aimed at improving Oklahoma's economy. The grant was issued to the FAPC for the expansion of its services to more Oklahoma food industry businesses.

The FAPC is dedicated to processing basic value-added products to create jobs and income in Oklahoma, said FAPC Director J. Roy Escoubas.

"Economic development cannot occur in the food industry unless food safety is addressed," Escoubas said. "The FAPC is committed to innovations in food safety and the transfer of food safety technology to the Oklahoma agricultural and food processing industries."

Producers and processors of Oklahoma are concerned with bio-terrorism and other types of food chain terrorism, Escoubas said. The FAPC is planning to develop food safety model programs for receiving and processing raw food commodities including the product development associated with agricultural commodities.

"This work will allow continued growth of the food processing industry in Oklahoma," Escoubas said.

In addition, a food microbiology pathogen identification and profiling laboratory will be expanded to partner with the food safety model programs.

"The purpose of the laboratory is to identify, profile and maintain an evergreen ready-reference system for the identification, profiling and elimination of food-borne pathogens in raw agricultural commodities and food products in Oklahoma," Escoubas said.

The FAPC has supported economic development in the agribusiness and food industries of Oklahoma since inception in 1997.

The FAPC has assisted more than 850 Oklahoma businesses with more than 1,100 projects affecting more than 8,000 direct food-processing jobs and more than \$500 million in direct food processing revenue in Oklahoma.

###

Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, State and Local Governments Cooperating. The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, or status as a veteran, and is an equal opportunity employer.