



Food & Agricultural Products Center

NEWS RELEASE

Adding Value to Oklahoma

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OKCRA to hold dinner to showcase new and innovative products

By Mandy Gross, FAPC Communications Services Manager

STILLWATER, Okla. – The Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center, located on the Oklahoma State University – Stillwater campus, and OSU-Okmulgee Culinary Arts Program are holding an invitation-only dinner for food and agricultural industry leaders to taste new and innovative products. The dinner will be held April 11 at 6 p.m. in the State Room at the OSU-Okmulgee campus.

This collaborative partnership between the FAPC and OSU-Okmulgee Culinary Arts Program is known as the Oklahoma Culinary Research Alliance, or OKCRA, and helps to advance value-added products from processing to presentation.

“The dinner is a chance for OKCRA to highlight end-use ideas for ingredients and food items using principles in innovation,” said Andrea Graves, FAPC business planning and marketing specialist and chair of the OKCRA committee. “The alliance is excited to present these new products to key food industry leaders in Oklahoma.”

OKCRA will rely on the expertise and resources of the FAPC to identify opportunity areas in the food industry, combined with an innovative, highly specialized culinary arts class at OSU-Okmulgee that was developed specifically for the purpose of this collaboration.

The first project being addressed by OKCRA is to enhance and facilitate the movement from commodities to value-added products in the beef industry.

“The beef industry, in part with the Beef Checkoff, is currently investigating methods to bring additional value to the beef chuck,” said Jake Nelson, FAPC meat processing specialist. “Multiple sectors of processing industries could benefit from new or novel methods of fabrication, further processing, and final preparation for the consumer.”

Participants should expect an evening of interaction from not only students but also from presentations and action stations that will be displayed during the dinner, said Scott Sherrill, OSU-Okmulgee Culinary Arts faculty member and instructor of the class.

“Participants will see what we feel are the best and most innovative approaches to add value to a traditional commodity beef cut,” Sherrill said.

Students currently enrolled in the class will be available for questions and answers about the finished dishes and products.

In order to properly evaluate this partnership, OKCRA invited a few industry leaders to a luncheon held at the FAPC in late February to showcase the innovative approaches applied to the beef products developed by the students during the first half of the semester.

The final dinner for food and agricultural industry leaders will highlight the top innovative approaches developed during the entire course of the class. Not only will the alliance seek input for the current beef project during the dinner, but also for future projects.

“It is the goal of this collaboration to improve existing food products, expand product lines, create new products, exploit the health attributes of these products and enhance labeling opportunities for Oklahoma,” Graves said.

For more information about OKCRA or the dinner, call Andrea Graves at 405-744-6071 or e-mail andrea.graves@okstate.edu.

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