

Contact: Mandy Gross | FAPC Communications | 405-744-0442 | mandy.gross@okstate.edu

Students awarded at FAPC Research Symposium

By Stacy Patton, FAPC Communications Graduate Assistant

(March 9, 2009 Stillwater, Okla.) The Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center and the Institute of Food Technologists-Oklahoma Section held a Research Symposium in conjunction with Oklahoma State University Research Week.

The symposium featured a combination of oral and poster presentations, with student presenters in both categories competing for \$250 prizes, said Peter Muriana, FAPC food microbiologist and chair of the symposium.

“I lobbied hard for the Research Symposium early on, drawing from the positive experience I had as a graduate student where we put on a similar type of event,” Muriana said. “I am glad that it has been received well by all the faculty and students who take the time to participate. I always thought it benefited students in helping to provide another opportunity to present and discuss their research.”

Kalpana Kushwaha, a doctoral student in food science, took the prize with her oral presentation, titled “*In vitro* and *In vivo* virulence analysis of strong and weakly adherent strains of *Listeria monocytogenes*.”

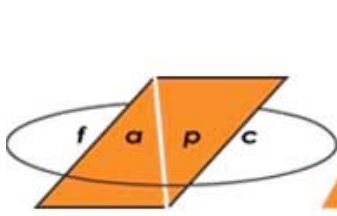
“It’s an honor for me to be recognized with best oral presentation award for my research work at the FAPC/IFT-OK Research Symposium, and my sincere thanks to Dr. Muriana for giving me an opportunity to work with him,” Kushwaha said.

Likewise, food science doctoral student Dinesh Babu won the poster division with his presentation, titled “Rapid and sensitive detection of aflatoxins in animal feeds, cereal grains and food products using immunomagnetic bead-based recovery and real-time PCR assay.”

“Working with Dr. Muriana itself is a rewarding experience, and being recognizing with the best poster presentation for our research work during the FAPC Research Symposium is an added bonus,” Babu said. “Thanks for FAPC/IFT-OK and sponsors for creating this opportunity to students at OSU.”

In addition to highlighting food and agricultural product research conducted by the FAPC and OSU, the symposium included a keynote address by Michael Davidson, food microbiology professor and head of the Department of Food Science and Technology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Davidson addressed the issues of natural antimicrobials in the food industry.

The FAPC was delighted that Davidson could be the keynote speaker, Muriana said.



“Not only is he a noted expert in the field of food antimicrobials, but also it was nice to bring in someone that was so impressed with our facilities and in a position to possibly guide students in our direction as well,” Muriana said. “Dr. Davidson said he also benefited from his visit in that he picked up a lot of ideas on extension activities, and he would like to come back with some administrators to visit our operation again in the near future.”

The event also included a tour of the FAPC facilities, including demonstrations in the wet processing room, enology laboratory and microbiology laboratory.

“Several of the participants commented that they enjoyed the tour,” said Chuck Willoughby, FAPC manager of client relations. “This was a great way to really show a few examples of research and development activities at the FAPC, beyond the oral and poster presentations.”

Sponsors of the FAPC/IFT-OK Research Symposium included 3-M Microbiology, PetSci and Unitherm Food Systems.

###

Oklahoma State University is a modern land-grant system that cuts across disciplines to better prepare students for a new world. Oklahoma’s only university with a statewide presence, OSU improves the lives of people in Oklahoma, the nation, and the world through integrated, high-quality teaching, research and outreach. OSU has more than 32,000 students across its five-campus system and more than 19,000 on its Stillwater campus; with students from all 50 states and about 110 nations. Established in 1890, OSU has graduated more than 200,000 students who have made a lasting impact on Oklahoma and the world. CREATE - INNOVATE - EDUCATE - GO STATE!