

Robert M. Kerr
Food & Agricultural Products Center

NEWS RELEASE

Adding Value to Oklahoma

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Marketing expert discusses food trends during FAPC Research Symposium

(Stillwater, Okla. – Feb. 28, 2011) Marketing food trends expert A. Elizabeth Sloan spoke Feb. 22 to more than 75 research enthusiasts and industry representatives during an annual research symposium.

Oklahoma State University's Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center, together with the Institute of Food Technology-Oklahoma section, held the symposium to bring academics and industry together and to spotlight food and agricultural products research conducted by FAPC and other OSU researchers.

One of the highlights of the event was Sloan's keynote presentation "Mining Food Mega Trends: Making Hay Out of Healthy, Home Grown, Home Cookin' and Other Super Hot Industry Issues."

"We were very excited for Dr. Sloan to speak about these recent market trends in the food industry on important industry related topics," said Chuck Willoughby, FAPC manager of client relations. "Food marketing plays an important role in developing products, and that is something we do very well here at the FAPC."

Sloan, president of Sloan Trends & Solutions, draws on her experience to consult with companies in regards to new trends, foods, directions and strategies.

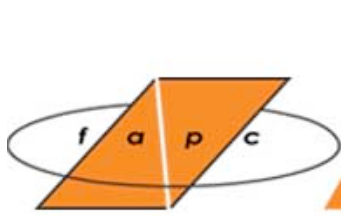
During her presentation, Sloan referenced the different age group generations and the food trends related to each generation.

"It's become a science of how to direct your foods to what age group in product development," Sloan said. "Many young people have found health and nutrition, and that is a strong future driver."

Because of this, the younger generation is focusing more on functional foods, which is an emerging field in food science due to its increasing popularity with health-conscious consumers.

"Functional foods can and do sell," Sloan said.

The annual number of supper meals prepared and consumed in the home is the highest it has been since 1992. This has been attributed to eating healthier, spending more time with the family, entertaining guests, growing home gardens, and enjoying the celebrity chef movement.



“Basic ingredients are going through the roof,” Sloan said. “This is huge.”

Grilling and marinating also is at an all-time high. The group that has grown the most in terms of grilling is Generation Y. In the United States the percent of people using marinating sauces and rubs/mixes are 67 percent and 62 percent, respectively.

Research has shown the younger generation group wants to use these marinades, rubs, and spice and dinner mixes, known as “helpers” in the making of restaurant foods at home.

“The younger group wants helpers not replacements,” Sloan said. “They don’t want their meals put together for them. Only 18 percent want a complete kit.”

Although Generation Y dominates the grilling and marinating markets, Boomers are the No. 1 Crockpot or slow cooker users.

Another hot trend is home entertainment.

“What do you do when you entertain?” Sloan asked. “You put your best food forward. People are willing to pay a lot more when they are entertaining.”

The research shows that 36 percent buy gourmet foods to entertain, 24 percent use gourmet to impress guests and 30 percent visit a butcher for special occasions.

Sloan also discussed the topic of buying local.

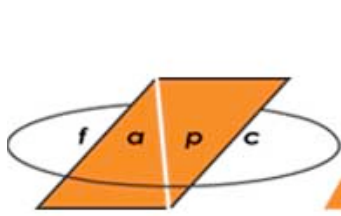
“When local is available in a supermarket, 71 percent will buy it,” she said.

Chefs predicted the hottest trend in restaurant concepts in 2010 would be gardens. Other hot concepts according to chefs include cooking classes and demonstrations, street food and mobile food trucks/carts, restaurants on farms and gastro pubs.

“Everybody wants to be close to the farm these days,” Sloan said. “The farmer is the most sought after spokesperson in the United States.”

Although the interest of buying local is high, the concept of organic is way down. This is due to people viewing natural and organic as the same, and they will not pay the extra price for buying organic.

“We were fortunate to have Dr. Sloan as our keynote speaker,” said Peter Muriana, FAPC food microbiologist. “She was an exciting speaker and very knowledgeable about the future direction of food trends. Her talk was keen to many food companies in the state as they are



preparing new products, markets and strategies. We are also lucky to have her presentation available, and I suspect that those who were not able to attend would wish they could have after they see the re-play of her presentation.”

The video of Sloan’s keynote presentation is available online at www.fapc.biz/sloanvideo.html. Other material discussed by they keynote also are available online at www.fapc.biz/researchsymposium.html.

In addition to the keynote presentation, more than 15 industry participants conversed with Sloan during the “Lunch with the Keynote” session and graduate students participated in oral and posters presentations.

The FAPC research symposium was held in conjunction with OSU Research Week. Sponsors of the FAPC/IFT-OK Research Symposium include Advance Pierre Foods, Bar-S Foods, BAMA Companies, Braum’s, Shawnee Milling, Sonic, Producers Cooperative Oil Milling and Vaughan’s Foods.

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