



Robert M. Kerr
Food & Agricultural Products Center

NEWS RELEASE

Adding Value to Oklahoma

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

FAPC highlights food and agricultural research during symposium

By Mandy Gross, FAPC Manager of Communications Services

(Stillwater, Okla. – Feb. 18, 2010) Oklahoma State University's Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center, together with the Institute of Food Technology-Oklahoma section, held the 10th annual FAPC/IFT-OK Research Symposium on Feb. 16 to highlight food and agricultural products research conducted by FAPC and other OSU researchers.

"The event provided an opportunity for graduate students to make oral and poster presentations of their work and for researchers to network with others in the food and agricultural field and possibly foster future collaborations among colleagues," said Dr. Peter Muriana, FAPC food microbiologist and chair of the symposium.

The event began with keynote speaker Dr. Tony Mata of Mata & Associates, who gave a presentation on "Research Meats Reality: Challenges of New Product Development."

"I am a 'meat geek,'" Mata said. "I'm here to talk about the challenges of collecting research and taking it to the plant and sharing my experiences of this crazy new product development.

Mata defined "meat geek" as "a person who is narrow-minded or accomplished in scientific or technical pursuits and has a ridiculous obsession for all things meat."

Mata explained that new products have a high failure rate, no more than 5 percent make it from the bench to the market and no more than 10 percent succeed in the market place.

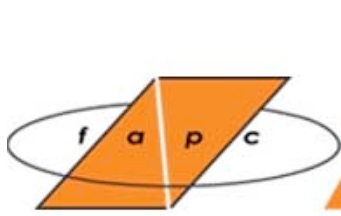
However, he gave examples of successful new products, such as Lunchables®, Häagen-Dazs® ice cream, chicken wings, chicken nuggets, rotisserie chicken, Hot Pockets®, fajitas and flat iron steak. Mata pointed out that all of these products possess at least one of the attributes or characteristics of new products, which include a true new offering, convenience breakthrough and quality breakthrough.

Although developing new products is a challenging endeavor, Mata suggested some practices to help avoid disaster: a skeptic champion is essential, address the toughest make-or-break questions first, celebrate killing projects because it's a numbers game, always push for single endless raw material, always conduct an autopsy of products that fail and don't be too proud to be "second best."

"We were fortunate to have Dr. Mata be our keynote speaker," Muriana said. "He was an exciting speaker and very knowledgeable in product development."

Participants also had the opportunity to see a demonstration of the Cozzini SuspenTec® system, led by Joe Prego of the Cozzini Group.

The equipment is on loan at the FAPC for one year of research to examine various applications. The SuspenTec® process involves 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.



Mata was one of the key individuals to get the Cozzini SuspenTec® housed at the FAPC.

“We are very excited that we could put Dr. Mata and the Cozzini SuspenTec® demonstration together in a very important industry related topic,” said Chuck Willoughby, FAPC manager of client relations. “Food scientists play an important role in developing products, and that is something we do very well at the FAPC.”

The symposium also included an industry luncheon with the keynote speaker and a career luncheon for students.

Russell Nabors of Lopez Foods in Oklahoma City, Teresa Ponce of Sigma Alimentos in Seminole, Okla., and Gary Whetstone of Chef’s Requested Foods in Oklahoma City talked to the students about their experiences of attending Oklahoma State University and what helped them most in their current positions in the food industry.

Immediately following the symposium, graduate student awards were presented in both the oral and poster presentation categories.

Lakmini Wasala from OSU’s department of entomology and plant pathology won first place in the oral competition with her presentation, “Dissemination of *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7 to the spinach phylloplane via regurgitation of house flies (*Muska domestica*).

And, in the poster presentation category, Youri Joh from the FAPC and OSU’s department of horticulture and landscape architecture won first place with her poster titled, “Quantification of antioxidant capacity and content of two blackberry cultivars grown in Oklahoma.”

Both Wasala and Joh were awarded \$250 from the IFT-Oklahoma section.

This year’s research symposium was held in conjunction with OSU Research Week, which ran Feb. 15-19. Sponsors of the FAPC/IFT-OK Research Symposium were the Cozzini Group and The Beef Checkoff.

- ### -

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!