

Ohio State University's Food Industries Center Improves Services With Equipment Donations

AGC Heat Transfer, Fristam Pumps, Tetra Pak, Others Led Equipment Donations

Columbus, OH—Several dairy and food industry suppliers recently donated equipment to the Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

The donations will help provide hands-on training and applied research opportunities for Ohio's food industry professionals and entrepreneurs.

The state-of-the-art systems are located in the pilot plant at the Wilbur A. Gould Food Industries Center in OSU's department of food science and technology.

The new equipment includes an HTST pasteurizer skid and homogenizer, which allows for processing of milk, dairy and non-dairy products including frozen dessert mixes, non-dairy milks, yogurt mixes and juices.

This donation was spearheaded by OCS Processing Systems with gifts from Tetra Pak, AGC Heat Transfer, Rockwell Automation, Pentair, Anderson-Negele, Fristam Pumps, and Anderson Industrial Automation.

The new equipment also includes an expander-extruder-

cooker, donated by Anderson International, which can be used to produce snack foods, breakfast cereals, pet food and animal feed.

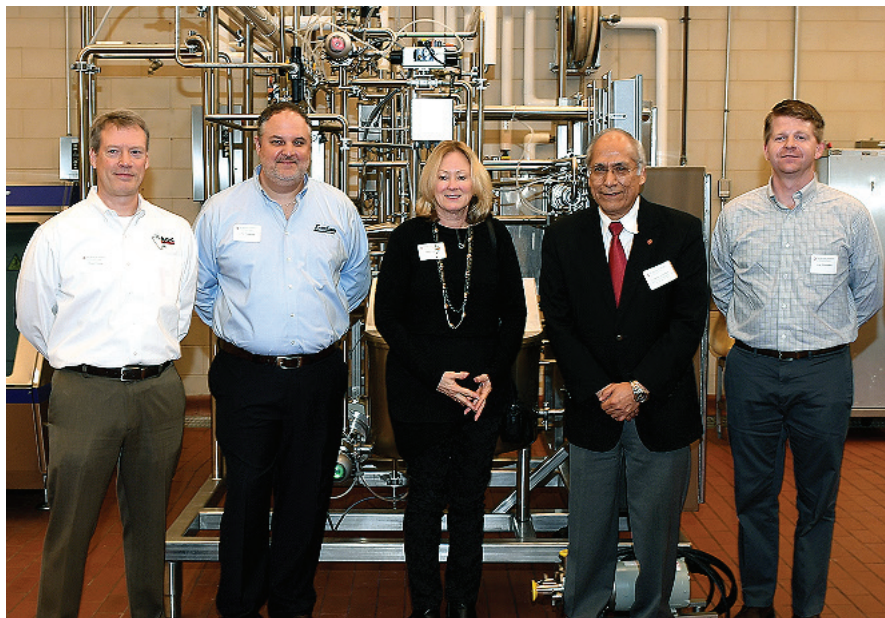
"Food companies in Ohio and beyond will be able to conduct relevant trials that are economical and can be scaled up, while having no effect on their operation's production efficiency," said Steven Simmons, a program specialist with OSU's Wilbur A. Gould Food Industries Center (FIC).

"The Center now has the opportunity to conduct applied research on a wider variety of food products, with an emphasis on foods for health, which aligns with the focus of the department of food science and technology, the college, and university," Simmons said.

"All current and future applied research initiatives are developed with the industry in mind. The Food Industries Center's goal is to produce relevant findings and data that are immediately applicable for the food industry," Simmons added.

"Thank you to our supporters for their generosity and dedication to our program," said OSU food science and technology professor Valente Alvarez.

The OSU Board of Trustees approved the establishment of FIC



Nine companies recently donated food manufacturing equipment to Ohio State University's Wilbur A. Gould Food Industries Center, including an HTST pasteurizer skid and homogenizer. This donation was spearheaded by OCS Processing Systems with gifts from Tetra Pak, AGC Heat Transfer, Rockwell Automation, Pentair, Fristam Pumps, Anderson-Negele and Anderson Industrial Automation. In the above photo are representatives from some of those donating companies (from left to right): Chris Purvis, AGC Heat Transfer; John Piganelli, Fristam Pumps; Beth Kloos, OCS Process Systems; Valente Alvarez, Ohio State Food Industries Center; and Joe Woodard, Rockwell Automation.

in 1982 to serve as an interface between the food industry and the Ohio State food programs.

Eleven years ago, university budget cuts threatened operations at the Food Industries Center, but response and subsequent donations from sponsors and alumni kept the Center running.

"With that, we went in a new direction and turned it around in about a year," Alvarez said. "Since then, we are now more independent of traditional university funding, and have implemented fee-based services," he said.

At the time, we had a pretty well-equipped food processing operation, but the dairy plant was almost empty, Alvarez said. We made some upgrades, welcomed outside users in an established form, and created a number of training programs.

The FIC pilot plants are fully equipped for product and process development of dairy, beverage, fruits and vegetables, bakery, pasta, and other food products. All initial consultations are confidential and free.

The dairy plant currently has five staff members to help operate the facility and applied research, he said. We're now tuning up the final features of the system, so we can bring the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) in to check all the necessary requirements.

"After that, we'll allow companies in who want to run a small trial or those who want to produce small batches of products," Alvarez said.

We also have about 10 academic courses throughout the year that are taught in the pilot plant, Alvarez said. Our priority is still with the students.

We don't do daily production, but rather teaching and research for students and industry employees, he said. As for dairy, we part-

nered with members of Quality Chekd Dairies, Inc.

"All the dairy training courses that Quality Chekd used to offer is now available at Ohio State. We have nine dairy courses in cooperation with Quality Chekd," Alvarez said.

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— Steven Simmons, OSU's Wilbur A. Gould Food Industries Center

Alvarez have an average of between six to 10 dairy and food science students per year working in the plant, and have roughly 500 students pass through our dairy courses annually.

All of our food science classes will have lab sessions that use the pilot plant, he added.

Food companies that use the pilot plant are also in collaboration with the students. When we do small projects, they participate in two ways – those we hire to help with the projects, and others who are hired on an hourly basis by companies who rent the facility and need production help, Alvarez said.

"The students sometimes go on to an internship with them, and other times they get scholarships or hired by the company," he continued.

For more information, visit www.foodindustries.osu.edu.

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