

Consumers to Farm: Changing Patterns in the Fruit and Vegetable Industry

2009 VFIC Conference, August 21, 2009

Lone Star Room – Omni Hotel-Downtown Austin

Texas is a leading producer of plant food products, an industry that contributes to the state's economy. Traditionally, farmers throughout the state and the nation have played a major role in the variety and supply of products from 'farm to table'. With the rising awareness among consumers about research on the human health benefits of fruits and vegetables, consumer demands are shifting the pattern to 'consumer to farm'. Now, production, marketing, and sales are becoming more dependent on consumer demands for better fruits and vegetables that deliver these health benefits.

VFIC research and outreach efforts: Understanding the demands of consumers and industry

Held in conjunction with the Texas Produce Convention, the one-day conference will provide information on current research through collaborative efforts of the interdisciplinary scientists within the Vegetable & Fruit Improvement Center (VFIC), examples of the changing needs of consumers and how this affects the produce industry from a regional, state and national perspective. Targeted sessions will include real-world presentations and applications, a round table discussion on the challenges and opportunities faced by the produce industry to meet changing consumer needs, and research experts in breeding/genetics, bioactive compound assays and isolation, and the mechanism of action.

This conference has received approval for 7 CPEU hours. Please indicate on the registration form if you need a certificate.

AGENDA

Registration 7:30 a.m.

Poster Session 8:00 to 10:15 a.m.

Session I. 10:30

Consumer Paradigm Change

Sundown Elementary, Donna Pittenger
Bryan ISD, Polly Wilson and Holli Strother
Austin Fire Department, Station 2, Rip Esselstyn

Keynote Address

Randall E. Westgren
Al and Mary Agnes McQuinn Chair in Entrepreneurial Leadership
Professor of Agricultural Economics
University of Missouri-Columbia

Lunch 12 – 1:45 p.m.

Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, Texas District 20
Dr. Mark Hussey, Vice Chancellor for Agriculture and Life Sciences, TAMU
Dr. Jeffrey Seemann, Vice President for Research, Texas A&M University

Session II. 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

**Round Table Discussion “Challenges and Opportunities for the Produce Industry:
Regional, State, National Perspective”**

Participants

Texas Restaurant Association, Richie Jackson
Houston Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association, John Kreger
General Mills, Jim Gratzek
United Fresh, David Gombas
Whole Foods, Chris Romano
Kroger, Gregg Proctor

Break

Session III. 4:00 – 5:30 pm

Research Updates:

1. Genetics/Breeding/ Environmental Effects on Bioactive Compounds
2. Bioassay derived assays and isolation and purification of bioactives
3. Mechanism of action studies related disease prevention