



# STATION NEWS

New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva, New York

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Oct. 24 - NOV 7, 2008

## BRIEFS

### Cornell Energy Fair

In keeping with Cornell's commitment to sustainability and in light of the recent spike in energy costs, the Employee Assembly has announced the return of the Cornell Energy Fair, to be held in Barton Hall on October 27, 2008, in conjunction with the annual President's Address to Staff. These events will be hosted by the Employee Assembly, with support of the Division of Human Resources and the Office of the Assemblies.

The energy fair will run from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and will provide staff with an opportunity to learn about energy and fuel-saving strategies, transportation options, alternative energy sources, and other aspects of sustainability from various Cornell community groups, local agencies and local vendors. Food and beverages will be available at discounted prices.

At 12:00 noon, President Skorton will deliver this year's address to staff, also in Barton Hall.

Thank you in advance for helping us make this event a success. I look forward to seeing you.

Mary Opperman

### TIAA-CREF Rep Visit

Just a reminder that TIAA-CREF's representative, Stephen Smith will be here on Tuesday, October 28th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to meet with those who are interested.

To schedule an appointment, please go to: <http://www.tiaa-cref.org/services/meetings/index.html> or call 877-209-3144. Meetings will be held in the Jordan Hall small conference room.

Pat Mahoney

(Continued on page 2)

## Food Venture Center Director is NYFVI Project Leader of the Year

The New York Farm Viability Institute named Dr. Olga I. Padilla-Zakour, director of the New York State Food Venture Center, its 2007 Project Leader of the Year. Padilla-Zakour has helped hundreds of New York farmers to improve their bottom lines by developing value-added products.

The New York Farm Viability Institute is an independent, farmer-led nonprofit organization that awards grant funds to projects that help farmers increase profits. Grants to the Food Venture Center allow farmers, especially fruit and vegetable growers, free and low-cost access to experts in food processing, safety, and packaging.

Padilla-Zakour and her staff helped growers from across the state develop such value-added products as maple cream, pickles, tomato sauce, and onion jelly.

In 2005, the Center received a \$100,000 two-year grant and used the funds to work with 54 farmers. New value-added products, or better processing techniques, helped those growers create six full time jobs and 17 part time jobs. Additionally, the growers reported new sales of \$605,000 annually.

Padilla-Zakour accepted the Project Leader of the Year award during a ceremony at this year's Empire Farm Days. "The potential for food entrepreneurship by New York State farmers is exciting and the Food Venture Center team is honored that the New York Farm Viability Institute has provided us with the funding needed to provide comprehensive support to farmers for start-up and established ventures across the state," Padilla-Zakour said.

Quality control, converting recipes to commercial scale, ingredient recommendations, packaging, and specialized training in practices such as kosher production are among the services the Food Venture Center offers. Agricultural producers credit the Food Venture Center and the NYFVI-funded value-added project with saving them time and money, connecting them to valuable resources, and helping them navigate the maze of the required food processing and safety regulatory compliance.

Allison Sacheli of Franjo Farms in Potter, NY, 45 miles south of Rochester, worked with the Food Venture Center to upsize a family-portioned recipe to make commercial-size batches of onion jellies. Sacheli says, "There would not have been another, or a less expensive, way for me to set up the required processing protocol and to navigate the necessary licensing paperwork so easily."

The collaboration also produced an approved food handling and packaging process that



John Lincoln, NYFVI Board Chair, presents Olga Padilla-Zakour with NYFVI's Project Leader of the Year Award. In accepting the award, Olga acknowledged the contributions of Judy Anderson, Herb Cooley, Donald Downing, Tom Gibson, Elizabeth Keller, and Cheryl Leach.

(Continued on page 2)



(BRIEFS, continued)

## Blood Drive Results

The Red Cross informed me that they received 21 units of blood from the drive at the Station this past Monday. That's amazing. My heartfelt thanks goes out to all of you who donated and those of you who tried to donate but were unable to.

*Nancy Long*

## The Annual Book Sale on Saturday, November 8, is almost here!

Now is the time to clear up some space in your homes! We are accepting donations from all subjects: fiction, non-fiction, children's, scientific, technical, cooking, reference, inspirations, biographies, music, movies, etc. Donations can be made in the form of hardcover and paperback books, CDs, DVDs, VHS tapes, puzzles. No magazines, please.

For every three items you donate, we will give you a coupon for one FREE item at the Book Sale!

Please bring your donations to the Library, located on the 1st floor of Jordan Hall by November 7th. We are open from 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Thursday, and 8 AM to 4 PM on Fridays.

If you have any questions, please call us at x2214.

Thank you in advance for your support!

*Frank A. Lee Library Staff*

### NOTICE

The designated date for Station  
Holiday Parties this year will be Friday,  
December 19, starting at 1 PM



(VENTURE CENTER, continued)

allows Sacheli to work out of a new 400-square-foot, farm-based kitchen.

Sacheli's husband Lucian grows 9.5 million pounds of onions annually on 170 acres. He says, "The value-added processing extends our selling season with an enterprise that allows the farm to produce value-added income during the months we are not selling fresh or storage onions."

Pat LaPoint of Hill 'n Hollow Farm of Pavilion, NY, 35 miles southwest of Rochester, makes fruit, vegetable and edible flower chutneys and vinegars. She says, "I needed the Food Venture Center specialists' skill with vinegar's pH levels and shelf life. Without the Food Venture Center, I would not have tackled value-added processing on my own." LaPoint says the professional and positive evaluation of her products by Padilla-Zakour was "the seal of approval and the reassurance I needed to know I could make this new enterprise work."

For Empire Fresh-Cuts of Oswego, NY, the food safety expertise of a Food Venture Center team led by Padilla-Zakour and microbiologist Dr. Randy Worobo helped the \$3.2 million onion processing facility that employs 30 in Oswego County, triple its sales. The company worked with the Food Venture Center to develop a custom-designed Hazard

*(Continued on page 3)*

# 31st Annual HOLIDAY Craft Show - Book Sale Nov. 8 10AM-3PM



## Jordan Hall





## Cornell Food Scientists Awarded \$1.67M USDA Food Safety Grant

**T**wo Cornell food scientists have received a \$1.67 million grant from the USDA to investigate the safety hazards to fresh fruit and vegetables during their journey from the farm to the fork. The project aims to prevent the introduction of food-borne pathogens into produce during growing, processing, transport, and preparation.

"The proposal is a multidisciplinary, collaborative effort among scientists from several institutions and states," said Randy Worobo, associate professor of food microbiology at Cornell's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva. "It includes applied research, outreach and education components aimed at reducing the risk of contamination of fresh and fresh-cut fruits and vegetables with food-borne pathogens."

The grant, one of two awarded in 2008 by the USDA's National Integrated Food Safety Initiative, went to Worobo and Martin Wiedmann, associate professor of food science at Cornell's Ithaca campus. The initiative addresses priority issues in food safety that are best solved with an integrated approach, which the Cornell proposal met with its broad scope and multidisciplinary team.

Worobo and Wiedmann's project will examine all of the practices and procedures used by every component of the food industry. Food can be contaminated by the practices of the livestock farmer, the produce grower, processors, retail and food service operations, and the consumer—or even while the goods are in transit.

"We want to identify the critical points or factors that present high risks for produce contamination," Worobo said. The research team will focus on preventive methods rather than eliminating pathogens once produce is contaminated.

Worobo in particular will investigate the propensity for pathogen transfer in produce production and post-harvest handling practices. He will also be involved in developing and delivering outreach and extension materials for farmers, processing plants, retail outlets, food service, and consumers, based on the team's findings.

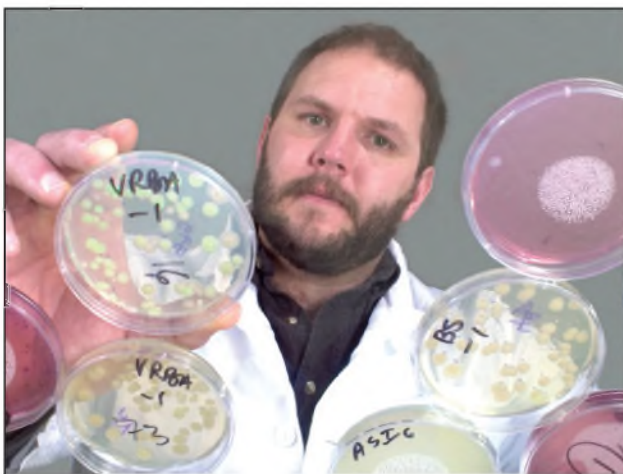
"The greatest challenges will be collecting all the research findings and condensing them into recommendations and guidance for different target audiences," Worobo said.

Improving food safety is critical in the U.S., where 76 million cases of food-borne disease occur annually, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates. Most cases are mild and cause symptoms for only a day or two but some illnesses result in hospitalization or even death.

More severe cases tend to occur in the very old, the very young, those who are immunocompromised, and in healthy people exposed to very high doses of an organism. Pathogens can contaminate produce through fecal-contaminated water sources on the farm, wildlife, during processing, shipping, at retail outlets, or through unsafe food preparation by consumers.

Five other Cornell faculty will collaborate on the project: Kathryn Boor, professor of food

*(Continued in next column)*



*R. Worobo*

*(VENTURE CENTER, continued)*

Analysis Critical Control Point Plan for food handling, laboratory, packaging, and record-keeping protocols.

The plan allowed Empire Fresh-Cuts to meet national food buyers' inspections, opening the door to large and year round commercial accounts.

Empire Fresh-Cuts Plant Manager Sam Zappala says, "Two of the biggest benefits of the plan are attracting new buyers and being able to provide them with a comfort level that passes on to consumers."

Padilla-Zakour says, "Adding value means increasing profitability, improving quality, and sometimes means increasing the health benefits of a product. We are constantly developing better processing techniques that increase the value of plant-based foods and learning more about the factors that affect the safety of specialty foods produced by small-scale producers."

Padilla-Zakour is quick to credit the producers she works with as the catalysts. "The farmers who have true entrepreneurial spirit bring great positive energy, farm-based innovative ideas and persistence to the process, and those are critical ingredients for success," she said.

The New York Farm Viability Institute receives funds from the state legislature and Department of Agriculture and Markets. Visit [www.nyfvi.org](http://www.nyfvi.org).

*Kara Lynn Dunn*

*(FOOD SAFETY GRANT, continued)*

science; Carmen Moraru, assistant professor of food science; Betsy Bihn, National Good Agricultural Practices program coordinator and senior extension associate for food science; Lorin Warnick, associate dean for veterinary curriculum, College of Veterinary Medicine; and Olga Padilla-Zakour, associate professor of food science and technology.

The grant also includes faculty from the University of Florida, the University of California, Davis, Texas Tech University, West Texas A & M, and Michigan State University.

*M. Fessenden*



## CALENDAR of EVENTS OCT 24 - NOV 7, 2008

### MEETINGS

#### CHAIR'S & UNIT LEADER'S MEETING

**Date:** Thursday, October 30, 2008  
**Time:** 3 PM  
**Place:** 251, Food Science Building

#### CALS FACULTY SENATE MEETING

**Date:** Wednesday, November 5, 2008  
**Time:** 4 PM  
**Place:** A134 Barton Lab, Audio/Video Linkage

#### EMPLOYEE MEETING

**Date:** Friday, November 14, 2008  
**Time:** 8:30 AM  
**Place:** Jordan Hall Auditorium

### SEMINARS

#### FOOD SCIENCE

**Date:** Wednesday, October 29, 2008  
**Time:** 11 AM  
**Place:** FST Conference Room  
**Title:** Antimicrobial Peptides Produced By Bacterial Isolates From Honey  
**Speaker:** Hyungjae Lee, Geneva

**Date:** Wednesday, November 5, 2008  
**Time:** 12 PM  
**Place:** FST Conference Room  
**Title:** Infrared Spectroscopic Analysis Of Natural Products: Fir And Vibrational Circular Dichroism Of Flavor Compounds  
**Speaker:** Bill Zuk, Hobart & William Smith

#### ENTOMOLOGY

**Date:** Tuesday, October 28, 2008  
**Time:** 10:30 AM  
**Place:** \*A134 Barton Lab  
**Title:** Integrative Physiology And Functional Genomics Of Insect Osmoregulation.  
**Speaker:** Julian Dow (Patton Lecture), University of Glasgow

(Continued in next column)

### SEMINARS CONTINUED

**Date:** Tuesday, November 4, 2008  
**Time:** 10:30 AM  
**Place:** \*A134 Barton Lab  
**Title:** The Invasion Biology Of European Crane Flies From An Ecological And Evolutionary Viewpoint  
**Speaker:** Matt Petersen, Geneva

#### HORT SCIENCE

**Date:** Monday, October 27, 2008  
**Time:** 10:30 AM  
**Place:** A-134 Barton Lab  
**Title:** Serving Member Interests in Changing Markets: the case of Pro-Fac Cooperative  
**Speaker:** Brian Henchan, Ithaca

### YOGA FOR EVERYONE

**Day:** Monday Evenings  
**Time:** 6 - 7:15 PM, 9/22/08 - 11/17/08  
**Place:** Jordan Hall Auditorium  
**Info:** This class is suitable for beginners and long time participants. You may join at any time. Call Nancy Reissig at x2323 for more details.  
**Instructor:** Margaret Newland, 719-7009

### TAEKARDIO AND BOKKENKICK

**Days:** Monday, TaeKardio  
Wednesday, Bokkenkick  
Thursday, TaeKardio  
**Time:** 11:30 AM-12:30 PM  
**Place:** Saw Dust Cafe  
**Cost:** \$25 for 2 classes/week or  
\$30 for 3 classes/week  
**Instructor:** Tina Felice, Geneva Martial Arts

## SAVE THE DATES!

**Monday  
December 1**  
*Benefair*  
*Jordan Hall*  
*10 AM to Noon.*

**Remember to get your flu shot  
at the Benefair**



**December 13  
1-3 PM**

**WE HAVE CALLED AHEAD AND  
SANTA CLAUSE IS AVAILABLE, SO  
THERE WILL BE FUN, FOOD, AND A  
VISIT FROM THE JOLLY, WEIGHT AND  
AGE CHALLENGED, RED SUIT WEARING  
MAN FROM THE NORTH POLE.  
CONTACT BETSY BIHN, EAB38 OR  
X2625.**



*Join us on Friday, November 7 at  
the 2008 Station Club Banquet  
and dance the night away!*