

FST Newsletter

November 2025

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Updates from the Department of Food Science and Technology
and The Food Processing Center



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Food Science and Technology

Food Innovation Center

1901 N 21 ST

Lincoln, NE 68588-6205

Phone: (402) 472-2831 | Fax: (402) 472-1693

1 FROM THE DESK OF DR. MARTINI



Dear Colleagues,

There are so many good things happening in the department, that I don't know where to start... Fall semester is going well and courses are running smoothly. Since Sarah Gergen's departure we have been heavily involved in recruiting activities. I want to especially thank Dr. Andreia Bianchini for leading the recruiting activities and all the volunteers that came to the rescue! It does take a village!!!! And we couldn't do this without all of you! So, please keep volunteering so that we can do more and more recruiting and get those labs full of students!

We are making a lot of progress with the Flavor Chemist position. We will be 2 excellent candidates to campus in December (hopefully). Please try to attend their seminars and interview activities so that they feel welcome and we get to know them better. If you know any of the people that are serving in the search committee, please take some time to thank them for their efforts! These searches take a lot of time from the search committee to I do appreciate their service to the department.

The position to hire a Food Safety Microbiologist will be posted soon. We had the "kick-off" meeting last week and we are finalizing the paperwork. We should be reviewing applications early next year. Keep your eyes open for the announcement and feel free to share with your contacts.

In addition to working on two faculty member searches, Susie and the search committee that she leads are starting to review applications for a recruiter and student coordinator. It seems that we have a few candidates that applied, and I can't wait to fill that role!

I finally wanted to share with all of you the results of the messaging exercise that we did during our retreat last August. Below are the winning messages for different audiences:

Student audience: Fueling the Future: Join the Movement to Create Safe, Sustainable, and Nourishing Foods for Communities Everywhere (12 out of 22 votes – 54.5%)

Faculty Audience: Advancing the global food system through interdisciplinary research and engineering innovation to deliver safe, nutritious, and affordable foods for all (12 out of 22 votes – 54.5%)

Administration Audience: Food Science and Technology educates the next generation of experts—driving innovation, safety, and health from harvest to consumer, while strengthening the workforce and sustainable economy (13 out of 22 votes – 59.1%)

Universal Audience: Food Science and Technology drives innovation in safety, sustainability, and health. By designing future-ready food systems and training professionals, we nourish communities locally and globally—feeding the world today and tomorrow (10 out of 22 votes – 45.5%) – there were three options for this audience, that is why the percentage is less than 50%

Of course, I don't want to end this newsletter without acknowledging the outstanding faculty and students that work very hard to disseminate their work. Below is a list of papers published this last month:

- Geary, EL; Wang, TL; Vogel, CL; Bauer, LL; Oba, PM; Templeman, J.R.; Danao, MG; Swanson, KSS. 2025. 310 Apparent total tract nutrient digestibility of raw, minimally processed, and retorted dog foods and their effects on fecal characteristics, metabolites, and microbiota of healthy adult dogs. *Journal of Animal Science*. 103:88-89 (<https://doi.org/10.1093/jas/skaf300.110>)

- Gustafson, C; Gitungwa, H; Rose, D. 2025. The impact of environmental and health messaging, pulse prevalence, and filtering tools on pulse-based food choice and nutrient profiles: a randomized online experiment. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems* (<https://doi.org/10.3389/fsufs.2025.1667600>)
- Humphrey, J; Jayasena, S; Taylor, SL; Baumert, JL. 2025. Effect of Storage Time and Temperature on the Recovery of Peanut, Milk, and Gluten Residue from Environmental Swabs. *Journal of Food Protection* (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfp.2025.100645>)
- Hu, L; Zhang, X; Gao, Q; Yang, M; Dong, X; Cheng, T; Liang, T; Yang, B; Zhang, Y; and Yin, Y. 2025. *Bacillus velezensis* T971 genome informs starch degradation in tobacco. *Frontiers in Microbiology*.
- Van Haute, MJ; Chacón-Vargas, K; Christensen, CM; Yumul, SRP; Abdulaali, FF; Benson, AK; Hutkins, R; Auchtung, TA. 2025. Comparative genomic and phenotypic analysis of potential beneficial properties of *Bifidobacterium adolescentis*. *mSphere*.
- Jaikel-Viquez, D; Okur, I; Ghorbani, J; Pérez-Arias, AA; Granados-Chinchilla, F; Astavia, G; Gomez-Salas, G; Baumert, J; Wang, B; Redondo-Solano, M. 2025. Exposure to aflatoxins through coffee ingestion in Costa Rica: A health risk assessment study. *Journal of Food Composition and Analysis* (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfca.2025.108472>)

Congratulations to all! We are very proud of all your accomplishments!

I hope you will all have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Silvana Martini, PhD

Professor, Department Head

Silvana Martini



2 SPOTLIGHTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Publications:

Yan Y[^], Patel R[^], Shanmugam NRS[^], Akresi J[^], Yin Y#. (2025) dbCAN-HGM: CAZyme gene clusters in gut microbiomes of diverse human populations. *Nucleic Acids Res.*, DOI: 10.1093/nar/gkaf1185

Akresi JE[^], Do TVT[^], Cui Z[^], Shanmugam NRS[^], Moraïs S, Bayer EA, Auchtung JA, and Yin Y#. Mucinolysome in gut microbiomes of farm animals and humans, *bioRxiv* [Preprint]. 2025 Oct 14:2025.10.14.682383, <https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2025.10.14.682383v2>

DR. MARTINI TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF FOOD SCIENCE

UNL Food Science & Technology Department Head Silvana Martini will lead a conversation about the opportunities with the Food Science and Technology industry. It will be from 5:30 pm to 8 pm on Thursday, Nov. 13 at Glacier Till in Ashland.

Students are encouraged to attend the meeting as it is an excellent way to start building a professional network or perhaps find the next internship or job. A heavy hors d'oeuvres buffet will be served.

To attend, please enter your information here before Thursday, November 6. The Department will cover the cost of student tickets and can provide rides to the event as needed.

Follow us on social media!



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[@nebraskafoodscience](https://www.instagram.com/nebraskafoodscience)

[/school/nebraskafoodscience](https://www.linkedin.com/school/nebraskafoodscience)

[@UNLFoodScience](https://twitter.com/UNLFoodScience)

The University is closed
November 27 & 28th for
the Thanksgiving
Holiday

- **Nov 1 – 🍕 National Calzone Day**
“Stuffed, cheesy, and delicious—celebrate #NationalCalzoneDay with your favorite filling!”
- **Nov 2 – 🍳 National Deviled Egg Day**
“Classic or spicy? How do you like your deviled eggs? #DeviledEggDay”
- **Nov 3 – 🥪 National Sandwich Day**
“From PB&J to paninis—what’s your go-to sandwich? #NationalSandwichDay”
- **Nov 4 – 🍬 National Candy Day**
“Treat yourself! What’s your favorite candy? #NationalCandyDay”

3. SPOTLIGHTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Shining a Spotlight on a Dairy Career

On Monday, Oct. 27, students met with Scott Tomes, Senior Vice President, Sales & Marketing at Bongards, to listen to the story of his career in the dairy products industry and how he leads his company's sales and marketing strategies. Bongards is a farmer-owned co-op and cheese supplier based in Minnesota.

The event was part of the American Dairy Products Institute (ADPI) Career Spotlight Program. The ADPI hosts events to 'future-proof' the dairy industry by promoting careers in the dairy industry and by connecting employees to the dairy industry for decades to come.

In addition to attending Career Spotlight presentations, ADPI has a mentorship program designed to connect students with industry professionals to discuss the industry, career options, and paths. Students can request a mentor in the Dairy Industry.



Reminder that Microsoft Migration is November 19th. You should have received an email from Future Ready Workspace Project with all the logistics.

FOSSIL DAY 2025

The Bioinformatics and Genomics lab led by Dr. Yanbin Yin contributed to hands-on activities and engagement stations in the Fossil Day 2025 that took place on October 11th in the University of Nebraska State Museum (<https://museum.unl.edu/programs-events/annual-events/fossil-day.html>). We had over 20 K-12 kids and their families stopped by and participated in the hands-on activities that we designed centered on our green algae project. These activities included finding algal cell filaments under the microscope, coloring algal filaments on coloring sheets, watching a short video about algae, and exploring AlphaFold enzyme 3D structures on a computer. The kids learned the importance of studying these algae for their applications in food, fuel, and medicine.



4. Spotlights & Highlights

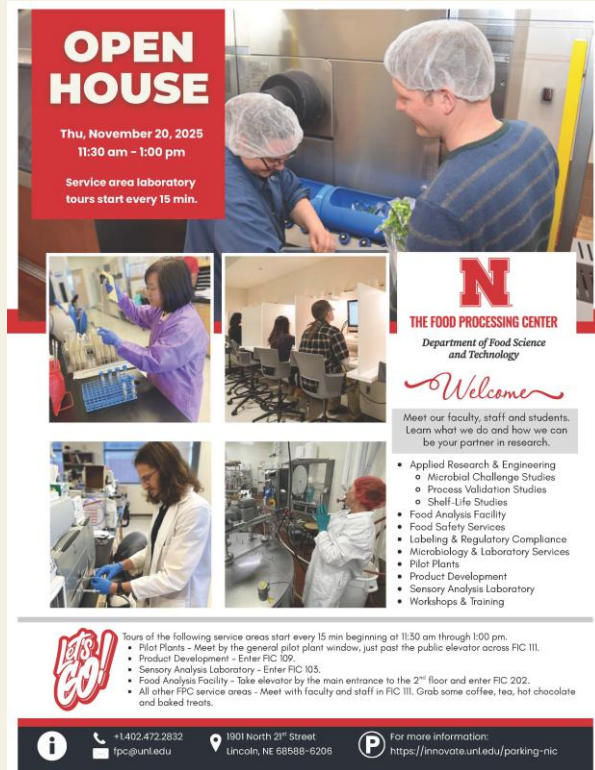
FPC OPEN HOUSE

The FPC will be hosting an Open House on Thursday, Nov 20th from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, in lieu of a formal department seminar. All FST faculty, staff and students are invited to visit FPC service labs to learn more about our equipment rentals and testing services. See attached flyer.

- What: **Open House**
- Who: **The Food Processing Center**
- When: Thursday, November 20, 2025. Lab tours start every 15 min beginning 11:30 am through 1:00 pm.
- Where: Stop by FIC 111, 103, 109, pilot plants, and 202.

We will have one final seminar presentation hosted by the Phi Tau Sigma Nebraska Chapter.

- Presentation: **Sustainable Food Packaging**
- Presenter: **Dr. Eva Almenar, Professor, School of Packaging, Michigan State University**
- When: Thursday, December 4, 2025 at 12:00 pm. Coffee and baked treats will be served at 11:30 - 11:55 am.
- Where: Room 277 Food Innovation Center



OPEN HOUSE
Thu, November 20, 2025
11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Service area laboratory tours start every 15 min.

THE FOOD PROCESSING CENTER
Department of Food Science and Technology
Welcome
Meet our faculty, staff and students. Learn what we do and how we can be your partner in research.

- Applied Research & Engineering
 - Microbial Challenge Studies
 - Process Validation Studies
 - Shelf-Life Studies
- Food Analysis Facility
- Food Safety Services
- Labeling & Regulatory Compliance
- Microbiology & Laboratory Services
- Pilot Plants
- Product Development
- Sensory Analysis Laboratory
- Workshops & Training

Tours of the following service areas start every 15 min beginning at 11:30 am through 1:00 pm.

- Pilot Plants - Meet by the general pilot plant window, just past the public elevator across FIC III.
- Product Development - Enter FIC 109.
- Sensory Analysis Laboratory - Enter FIC 103.
- Food Analysis Facility - Take elevator by the main entrance to the 2nd floor and enter FIC 202.
- All other FPC service areas - Meet with faculty and staff in FIC III. Grab some coffee, tea, hot chocolate and baked treats.

+1.402.472.2832
fpc@unl.edu

1801 North 21st Street
Lincoln, NE 68588-6206

For more information:
<https://innovate.unl.edu/parking-nic>

- **Nov 5 – 🍩 National Doughnut Day**
“Glazed, filled, or frosted—celebrate #NationalDoughnutDay with a sweet bite!”
- **Nov 6 – 🌮 National Nachos Day**
“Layered with cheese and toppings—nachos are always a good idea! #NachosDay”
- **Nov 7 – 💎 Bittersweet Chocolate with Almonds Day**
“A perfect pairing—bittersweet chocolate + almonds! #ChocolateAlmondDay”

ALUMNI GETS PUBLISHED

Jess Humphrey, who completed her undergraduate honors thesis under the supervision of Dr. Steve Taylor, Dr. Baumert, and myself a few years ago had her work published recently in the Journal of Food Protection. I have included the citation below.

Humphrey, J., Jayasena, S., Taylor, S. L., & Baumert, J. L. (2025). Effect of Storage Time and Temperature on the Recovery of Peanut, Milk, and Gluten Residue from Environmental Swabs. *Journal of Food Protection*, 100645.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfp.2025.100645>

5. Spotlights & Highlights



A+ Berry, Inc.

Lincoln, Nebraska

A+ Berry is a Midwest, university-born food company turning U.S.-grown aronia berries into clean-label, antioxidant-rich products for daily wellness. We partner with local farms and use a gentle, university-developed process that helps preserve polyphenols while smoothing aronia's natural tartness, delivering vibrant flavor and strong shelf appeal. Our export-ready line includes: AroJuice: 8 oz cold-pressed aronia juice, enjoyed straight or as a mixer; AroBoost: 2 oz aronia concentrate shot for anti-inflammation or recovery; AroPowder: freeze-dried aronia fruit powder for beverages, bakery, and functional foods.

All products are free from added sugar, artificial colors, heating process or preservatives. A+ Berry sells in U.S. retail doors and to ingredient buyers, with strong repeat purchases. We welcome importers, distributors, and co-manufacturing partners seeking premium berry ingredients or ready-to-drink formats.

- **Nov 8** – 🍷 **National Cappuccino Day**

*“Warm up with a frothy cup!
#CappuccinoDay”*

- **Nov 9** – 🍗 **Fried Chicken Sandwich Day**

*“Crispy, juicy, and irresistible!
#FriedChickenSandwichDay”*

- **Nov 10** – 🍰 **Vanilla Cupcake Day**

*“Sweet and simple—celebrate
with a vanilla cupcake!
#CupcakeDay”*

- **Nov 11** – 🍦 **Sundae Day**

*“Build your dream sundae!
#NationalSundaeDay”*

Quick Recipe Corner

1 🍲 Quick Fall Minestrone Soup

Servings: 8

Calories: ~212 per serving

Time: ~30 minutes

2 Ingredients

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 2½ cups peeled, cubed butternut squash
- 2½ cups peeled, cubed baking potato
- 1 cup cut green beans
- ½ cup diced carrot
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp salt
- 4 cups chopped kale
- ½ cup uncooked orzo (or rice-shaped pasta)
- 1 (16-ounce) can white beans (e.g., cannellini), rinsed and drained
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

3 Instructions

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; sauté for about 2½ minutes until tender.
2. Add broth, squash, potato, green beans, carrot, oregano, pepper, and salt. Bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat and simmer for 3 minutes.
4. Add kale, orzo, and beans. Cook for 5 minutes or until orzo is done and vegetables are tender.
5. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese before serving, if desired.


6. The Rundown

Welcome to “The Rundown”, your monthly snapshot of all interesting things, unexpected, and just plain useful.

This page is your go-to for quick updates, fun facts, helpful tips, and anything else that doesn't quite fit anywhere else—but still deserves a spot in the spotlight.



Please update your vehicle information for the NIC parking system.



Please ensure your vehicle information is up to date in the NIC Parking system, including the make and model of your vehicle and license plate.

Send your updated license plate and any other vehicle information to Nebraska Nova by emailing parknic@goldenrodcompanies.com.

Updating your vehicle information, including your license plate, will ensure the correct vehicle information is on file for the NIC parking system.



Lincoln Police Department Jurisdiction at NIC

The Lincoln Police Department (LPD) is responsible for law enforcement at Nebraska Innovation Campus. If an incident occurs at NIC, please contact **LPD directly**, not UNL Police.

- For emergencies, call 911
- For non-emergencies, call (402) 441-6000

LPD is committed to providing quality police services that promote a safe and secure community. We encourage all NIC Partners to save these numbers for quick access in case of an emergency.

- Nov 12 – 🍕 **Pizza with the Works Day**

*“Hold the anchovies!
#PizzaWithTheWorksDay”*

- Nov 13 – 🍪 **Bread Pudding Day**

*“Comfort food at its finest!
#BreadPuddingDay”*

- Nov 14 – 🥒 **Pickle Day**

*“Crunchy, tangy, and totally lovable!
#NationalPickleDay”*

- Nov 15 – 🍰 **Bundt Day**

*“Celebrate the iconic cake shape!
#BundtDay”*

7. Spotlight on Grads Students



- Nov 16 – 🍔 **Fast Food Day**
“Drive-thru favorites! #FastFoodDay”
- Nov 17 – 🍞 **Homemade Bread Day**
“Nothing beats the smell of fresh bread!
#HomemadeBreadDay”
- Nov 18 – 🍏 **Apple Cider Day**
“Sip into fall! #AppleCiderDay”
- Nov 19 – 🍓 **Pop Tart Day**
“Toaster treats for the win!
#PopTartDay”

SAVE THE DATE: SALUTE TO GRADUATES ON DEC. 19

The Department of Food Science & Technology invites you to celebrate the achievements and successes of our December 2025 graduating students! The celebration will be at 11 a.m. on Friday, December 19 in FIC 111.



The UNL Phi Tau Sigma Chapter and Food Science Club invite students, faculty, and staff to a department Movie Night featuring the documentary *Poisoned: The Dirty Truth About Your Food*. This documentary examines modern food safety challenges and the systems that protect (and sometimes fail) in the US.

This informal gathering is an opportunity to engage with an important topic in food science while connecting with peers in a relaxed setting. **Snacks and beverages will be provided.**

Date: Wednesday, November 19

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Room 111, Food Innovation Center (FIC)

Hosted by the **Food Science Club** and **UNL Phi Tau Sigma Chapter**

8. Upcoming Events

Nov. 12 — Open Registration for Spring 2026 Semester

Nov. 12 — ASUN Senate Meeting

Nov. 13 — *Nebraska Beef Summit*

Nov. 13 — *IFT Aksarben: The State of Food Science*

Nov. 14 — Last Day to Withdraw from Full Semester Courses for the Term

Nov. 20 – FPC Open House

Nov. 21 — *Job Strategies for International Students*



Thanksgiving Week

- **Nov 20** – 🍪 **Peanut Butter Fudge Day**
“Sweet, salty, and smooth!”
#PeanutButterFudgeDay”
- **Nov 21** – 🍗 **Stuffing Day**
“The unsung hero of Thanksgiving!”
#StuffingDay”
- **Nov 24** – 🐟 **Sardines Day**
“A bold bite for adventurous eaters!”
#SardinesDay”
- **Nov 25** – 🍷 **Parfait Day**
“Layers of yum! #ParfaitDay”
- **Nov 26** – 🍰 **Cake Day**
“Let them eat cake! #NationalCakeDay”
- **Nov 28** – 🍞 **French Toast Day**
“Golden, crispy, and perfect for brunch!”
#FrenchToastDay”