

The Networker



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National Food Safety
& Toxicology Center

165 FST Building
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824
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Interim Director
Dr. Ed Mather

NFSTC Members

Animal Health & Diag. Lab
Biochemistry
Botany & Plant Pathology
Communications
Entomology
Food Sci. & Human Nutri.
Horticulture
Large Animal Clin. Science
Microbiology
Pathology
Peds. & Human Develop.
Pharmacology/Toxicology
Sociology
Veterinary Medicine
Zoology

NFSTC finds health benefit from tart cherries

Cherries to Michigan are like potatoes to Idaho -- staples of the all-American diet and one of the states' leading cash crops. Not only are Michigan's tart red cherries one of the state's flagship products, they are also fast becoming a flagship for health and nutrition--and a boat load of the red fruit has landed for study on the shores of the National Food Safety and Toxicology Center (NFSTC) at MSU.



Dr. Nair in his NFSTC laboratory.

Dr. Muralee G. Nair with the NFSTC at Michigan State University, working with other researchers, discovered through in vitro studies that these tart rubies may relieve pain better than aspirin and ibuprofen. The same compounds that give the jewels their red tint also provide antioxidant protection similar to that found in vitamins E and C.

According to Dr. Nair, it's all in the color. The pigments that give the fruit its rich red shade belong to a class of natural colors called anthocyanins--also found in strawberries, blueberries and plums. Dr. Nair's research shows that the anthocyanins in tart cherries provide several times the anti-inflammatory relief of aspirin.

Dr. Nair also predicts that a pill will be developed in the near future with benefits like the whole cherry, or even better, because there are no sugars or acids to upset the stomach.

LOOK inside for the latest details on NFSTC's conference:

Risk Communication in Food Safety... "Motivating and Building Trust"

July 11-12, 2000



The Director's View

Dr. Ed Mather

Warm weather and the advent of spring brings to mind the inevitable need for growth and rejuvenation. It's natural and replenishing.

An infusion of new growth is also emerging at the center. Shortly before the January/February issue of *The Networker*, an information officer was hired to represent the NFSTC in its communications and to help build a public network.

Patricia L. Stewart joined our staff in January as communications coordinator. She is a trained journalist with a B.A. in business administration and a minor in marketing. After a career in media and public relations with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Pat worked out of her home as a consultant and writer. She also worked as a communications consultant with Public Sector Consultants, Inc., a research firm specializing in areas of public policy, health, economics and natural resources.

Sarah Larson started her new job mid-February with us as executive secretary to the director. She comes to us from the Department of Pediatrics and Human Development and is a valuable addition to our staff. We are extremely

pleased to have both Pat and Sarah with us.

Beginning April 1, Dr. A. Mahdi Saeed begins his new role as epidemiologist in food safety and microbiology (see article on page 3), and we hope to add another four faculty positions by

this time next year.



The search process continues for a permanent director for the center. The

number of applicants has been refined and narrowed, and we are looking forward to meeting with the final candidates.

Some of the recent news in the food safety arena has focused on food irradiation and the new rules that will allow this process to occur. We at the center believe it is important to clarify what is food irradiation and how it affects foods.

Food irradiation is a new technology that can eliminate disease-causing pathogens from foods. Treating food through the use of various irradiation processes can kill bacteria and parasites that may otherwise cause foodborne disease. This process of elimination of disease-causing microbes can be likened to milk pasteurization and pressure cooking of

canned foods. Some of the bacteria commonly found on raw meat and poultry includes *E. coli*, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* species--pathogens being studied by various scientists at the center. Irradiation of animal feed could also prevent the spread of *Salmonella* and other pathogens to livestock, yet another area to be studied by the center researchers.

There exists an abundant body of scientific evidence that illustrates irradiation does not make food unsafe to eat, nor does it harm the nutritional value of food. Irradiated foods need to be stored, handled and cooked in the same manner as unirradiated foods. A logo has been developed for packaging in order to indicate that the food has been irradiated. Ultimately, the decision to purchase and eat irradiated foods rests with the consumer.

As the center expands and continues to move forward in its research, I assure you that one of our primary goals is to identify causes and sources of both bacterial and chemical foodborne illnesses and to develop effective prevention methods. It is also our goal to provide the public with an understanding of food safety issues and an avenue for communication. If you have concerns or comments, do not hesitate to contact us. Faculty and staff at the center stand ready to respond and remain excited about the challenges and opportunities we may face.



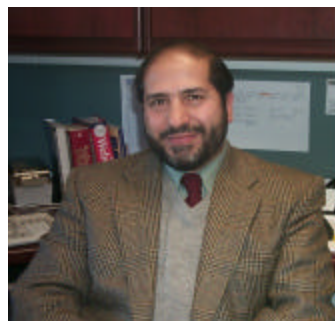


New epidemiologist joins NFSTC team

Dr. A. Mahdi Saeed from Purdue University is the newest member of the faculty team at the National Food Safety and Toxicology Center (NFSTC). Dr. Saeed begins his new position April 1 as an epidemiologist in food safety and microbiology. In addition to his research and epidemiological studies on foodborne diseases, Dr. Saeed will be affiliated with the medical school at MSU and will teach classes in epidemiology and public health.

During his time at Purdue, Dr. Saeed's primary area of research was studying Salmonella in poultry and the impact on food safety. "The application of food safety and foodborne illnesses is very appealing to me, and I am excited to join the MSU team," Saeed said. While at the NFSTC, Dr. Saeed hopes to be a key contributor to the effective prevention and alleviation of foodborne diseases. "With his background, I am confident that Dr. Saeed will play a major role in this endeavor," said Dr. Ed Mather, interim director for the center. "He is rich with experience, and we intend to tap that resource."

In addition to his research, Dr. Saeed is the editor-in-chief of an international text, Salmonella Enteritidis in Humans and Animals: Epidemiology, Pathogenesis, and Control. Dr. Saeed, who wrote four of the 39 chapters, also recruited and selected the other 80 internationally recognized authors and shepherded the entire text through to publication.



Dr. A. Mahdi Saeed during his visit at the NFSTC in February.

Sandman and Curwood to keynote July conference

Risk communication is the central theme of the NFSTC's conference in July, and who better to kick off the event than Dr. Peter Sandman, the internationally renowned and preeminent risk communication consultant from Rutgers University. Dr. Sandman is the creator of the "Hazard+Outrage" formula for risk communication and has worked on communication aspects of a wide range of safety, environmental and other problems.

Sharing the limelight with Dr. Sandman will be Steve Curwood, executive producer and host of National Public Radio's *Living on Earth*. Curwood's relationship with NPR dates back to 1979 when he was a reporter and host of the weekend edition of *All Things Considered*. He has reported on science, politics and the environment. His recent reporting includes a groundbreaking series on chemical compounds that disrupt the endocrine system and their effects on human health and fertility. Curwood graduated from Harvard University where he teaches as a visiting lecturer.

The conference will also feature a panel comprised of experts who will provide their perspectives about risk communication from industry, the media, a consumer advocacy group, and the government. Breakout sessions will cover a broad spectrum of topics; i.e., GMOs and biotechnology, irradiation, pesticides, labeling, emerging diseases, bovine TB, endocrine disruptions, drug residues, and more.

Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of a uniquely innovative conference. Fill out the enclosed **Registration Form** and send it in **NOW**.

Risk Communication in Food Safety
 "Motivating and Building Trust"
 July 11-12
 MSU Kellogg Center
 East Lansing, MI
Register Now!!!

MSU Internet course attracts attention from Zimbabwe

The global interest in food laws and regulations recently touched the NFSTC--literally. Dr. Tony N. Mutukumira from the University of Zimbabwe was housed at the center during his two-week stay at the Institute for Food Laws and Regulations. He is a faculty



Dr. Tony N. Mutukumira from the University of Zimbabwe.

member of the Institute of Food Nutrition and Family Sciences and obtained his PhD at the Agricultural University of Norway.

Dr. Mutukumira is coordinating an effort to include Southern Africa as a participating member of an Internet-based course on food laws and regulations offered by MSU. "Africa is a resource-rich continent, and our eventual inclusion would be a step toward bringing us to the forefront," said Dr. Mutukumira. "The developing world cannot be left behind because we are a global society, and there should no longer exist any demarcations."

According to Dr. Mutukumira, providing the latest information on food laws and regulations will enhance economic opportunities

for the developing world. "Today's consumers demand to know how their food is processed, packaged, handled, transported and stored. If businesses are to survive, they must meet certain criteria acceptable to the consumer."

Dr. Mutukumira believes these are universal issues and that the Internet course will provide the missing link for Southern Africa to become an integral component in the world of food trade.

For more information about the NFSTC or this newsletter, contact Pat Stewart, Communications Coordinator, at phone: 517-432-3100; fax: 517-432-2310; or e-mail: stewartp@cvm.msu.edu.

REGISTER NOW for the July 11-12 Conference on Risk Communication at MSU's Kellogg Center



National Food Safety & Toxicology Center
165 FST Building
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1302

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

REGISTRATION FORM

Risk Communication in Food Safety... "Motivating and Building Trust"

July 11-12, 2000

MSU's Kellogg Conference Center

East Lansing, MI

Name, Title, Organization

Street Address

City/State/Zip

Daytime Phone

Fax

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Cost

\$200 on or before June 16, 2000

\$250 after June 16, 2000

Payment Method

Check (made payable to Michigan State University in U.S. funds)

Visa/MasterCard

CARD NUMBER

EXPIRATION DATE

MSU Employee/Designee

MSU ACCOUNT NUMBER

Select Breakout Sessions: Please indicate numerically your first three choices (1,2,3). Registration for sessions is on a first-come, first-served basis. You will be notified at registration of the sessions assigned to you.

GMOs/Biotechnology

Bovine TB

Labeling

Exports/Imports

Irradiation

Pesticides

Organic & Conventional
Agriculture

Endocrine Disruptors

Recalls

Drug Residues

Emerging Diseases

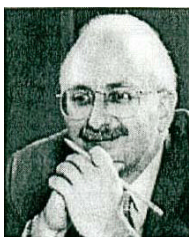
Drug Resistant
Diseases

Other topic suggestions:

Please indicate any special dietary requests:

Please return to: National Food Safety & Toxicology Center, 165 Food Safety & Toxicology Bldg., Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824; or fax to 517-432-2310.

CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Dr. Peter Sandman is the creator of the “Hazard + Outrage” formula for risk communication and is an internationally renowned speaker, educator and consultant. Dr. Sandman has worked on communication aspects of a wide range of safety, environmental and other problems. A Rutgers University member since 1977, Dr. Sandman founded the Environmental Communication Research Program (ECRP) at Rutgers and was its director until 1992. During that time ECRP published more than 80 articles and books on various aspects of risk communication, including separate manuals for government, industry and the mass media.

Steve Curwood is the executive producer and host of National Public Radio's award-winning program, *Living on Earth*. Curwood's relationship with NPR dates back to 1979 when he was a reporter and host of the weekend edition of *All Things Considered*. He has reported on science, politics and the environment. His recent reporting includes a groundbreaking series on chemical compounds that disrupt the endocrine system and their effects on human health and fertility. Curwood graduated from Harvard University where he teaches as a visiting lecturer in public communication and environmental change.



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