

**National
Food Safety &
Toxicology Center**

Director
Ewen C.D. Todd

Deputy Director
Ed Mather

Associate Director
Robert Roth

NFSTC Members
Agricultural
Engineering

Diagnostic Center
for Population
and Animal Health

Biochemistry

Botany & Plant
Pathology

Communications

Entomology

Epidemiology

Food Science &
Human Nutrition

Geological Sciences

Horticulture

Human Medicine

Large Animal
Clinical Science

Microbiology

Pathobiology &
Diagnostic
Investigation

Pediatrics &
Human Development

Pharmacology &
Toxicology

Sociology

Zoology

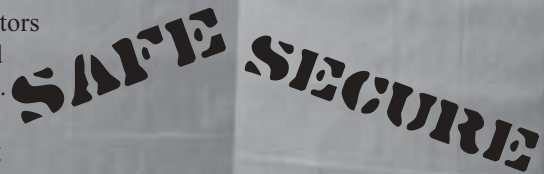
Protecting our food

Before war with Iraq began on March 19, food processors, grain elevators and stockyards were tightening security to protect the U.S. food supply from a possible bioterrorist attack. Inspections of food have been stepped up, and there is additional security at U.S. ports and border crossings. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Agriculture urges food plants, farms, grain elevators and other agribusinesses to inspect all trucks and cars entering their property and to escort visitors.

While the food industry is accustomed to dealing with risks and threats from unintended contamination (food safety), Sept. 11, 2001, was the turning point to think about intentional contamination (food security/biosecurity). The National Food Safety & Toxicology Center at Michigan State University is working with government, industry and colleagues in academia to meet food security needs.

The NFSTC is helping to reduce risks related to bioterrorist threats through:

- Adapting research to include methods for quickly detecting adulterants (such as pathogens or toxins) in food (www.foodsafe.msu.edu)
- Improving syndromic surveillance systems to identify outbreaks, such as the RUsick2 Foodborne Disease Forum (www.RUsick2.msu.edu)
- Enhancing networking, particularly through the newly-formed Michigan Homeland Security Task Force, the National Institute for Agricultural Security and existing state and federal agencies
- Developing improved systems in conjunction with industry for food security. One example is the NFSTC's support and organization of the First World Congress on Food Irradiation, May 5-7, 2003, in Chicago. This first-ever international congress on this approved food technology will provide industry solutions for decreasing the risk of food-borne disease (www.foodsafe.msu.edu/Congress/congress.html)
- Improving food safety education, such as the online Professional Master of Science (proMS) in Food Safety Program - also the first of its kind (www.foodsafe.msu.edu/proms/)



**SAFE
SECURE**

Looking back

Before anthrax and other biosecurity threats were issues, the need for food security in the United States arose in Oregon in 1984. The Rajneeshee cult was seeking to take political control of Wasco County by winning the local election. The Rajneeshees planned to sicken and thereby incapacitate most of the county's voters to win the election. To test the plan prior to the election, cult members sprinkled Salmonella on salad bars in 10 restaurants in The Dalles. More than 750 people became seriously ill as a result.

Planning ahead:

- Stay informed about food security risks
- Evaluate whether your processes could be vulnerable to intentional contamination or sabotage
- Update your crisis management plan annually
- Identify contacts to resume business operations during and following an emergency
- Consumers can submit complaints related to meat, poultry or egg products to the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555
- Support the NFSTC's research, education and outreach



Seminar Series wraps up for the year

As the first credited Seminar Series (VM 828) comes to a close, I would like to relive some of the highlights over the past two semesters, and especially thank the many speakers who have presented their work to our graduate students and faculty members. The sharing that results from these seminars greatly benefits our research and knowledge about food safety.

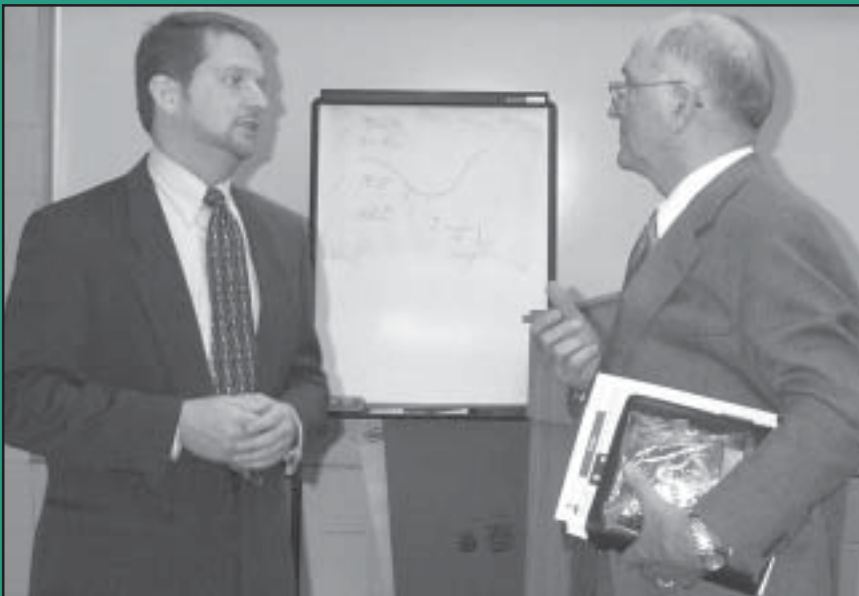
Speakers from off campus have included Daniel Casciano, director of the National Center for Toxicology



Research; Michael Farmer, CEO of Handy Lab; H. Scott Hurd, analytical epidemiologist for the National Animal Disease Center (USDA/ARS); David Huxsell, director of the Plum Island Animal Disease Center (USDA); and Randall Ruch, associate dean for graduate student recruitment at Medical College of Ohio.

We have also invited a wide variety of international speakers, including Carlton Gyles, professor of pathobiology at the University of Guelph (Canada); Robert Letcher, assistant professor at the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research at the University of Windsor (Canada); and Miroslav Machala of the Veterinary Research Institute (Czech Republic).

Special thanks goes to Robbyn Davenport of the NFSTC for organizing and publicizing the series.



Top: Ewen Todd, left, director of the NFSTC, welcomes speaker Ahmed Yousef, professor of food microbiology at Ohio State University. Above: Michael Woods, left, assistant professor in ANR Education and Communication Systems, discusses his presentation on risk communication with Edward Mather, deputy director of the NFSTC. The series continues at 3:30 p.m. each Monday in Room 162 NFSTC and concludes April 21.



Ewen C.D. Todd

5th anniversary brings special celebrations

It's amazing how time does fly - and in what you can accomplish in five years. Since the NFSTC building opened its doors in early 1998, we have made great strides in food safety research and education and hope you will help us celebrate throughout 2003, and beyond.

Edward Mather, deputy director of the NFSTC and former interim director, remembers how quiet those first few days were. The building began to fill up quickly though, and now our laboratories and offices are at full capacity. In fact, the Center has support and expertise from five colleges, 10 departments, MSU Extension and Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station.

We are planning the fifth anniversary celebration for later this year, and we are soliciting ideas. Please email Kirsten Khire at khirek@cvm.msu.edu if you would like to offer suggestions to the planning team. We are hoping to incorporate many ideas into the two conferences we are planning this year: the First World Congress on Food Irradiation (May 5-7, Chicago) and the Safety of Organic Food Conference (October, MSU).

We hope the special events, publications and programs will mean as much to you as they will to the faculty, staff and students who are part of the Center.



Taste of mini-grants



The first mini-grant recipients of the MDA Consumer Food Safety Education Fund gathered on Feb. 20 at the NFSTC to share their projects with the MSU Food Safety Area of Expertise (AoE) Team and with each other. Shari Kuelske, above, of Roscommon/Crawford County Extension, describes her mini-grant program developed for Head Start families. The group concluded with a tour of several NFSTC labs, left.

International Food Law wins award

The International Food Law Distance Learning Certificate Program, sponsored by the Institute for Food Laws & Regulations and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University, has been announced as the American Distance Education Consortium's (ADEC) 2003 National Excellence in Distance Education Award. The online food law courses are taught by an international faculty of food law and food industry professionals, including nine attorneys in 25 countries. Since the International Food Law overview course was first offered three years ago, students from 35 countries have enrolled in the various courses. For further information, the course preview web site for the International Food Laws Distance Learning Certificate Program is: <http://vu.msu.edu/preview/anr-ifl/>. Call 517-355-8275 or email iflr@msu.edu for more details.

Application deadline nears for proMS

The National Food Safety and Toxicology Center at Michigan State University is nearing the one-year anniversary of approval by the Academic Governance Committee of the online Professional Master of Science (proMS) in Food Safety program. Students interested in applying for the program can do so online at www.foodsafe.msu.edu/proms/. VM 810 (Introduction to Food Safety and Professional Development) will take place on campus July 27-Aug. 8. Online applications must be received by **April 30** in order to take VM 810 this summer. To apply, contact Pattie McNiel at mcnielpa@cvm.msu.edu



Professor Muraleedharan Nair explains his research on bioactive natural products and phytochemicals to Farm Women's Symposium attendees on March 13.

Farm Women's Symposium visits

About 100 attendees of the 12th annual Farm Women Symposium toured the NFSTC for the first time on March 13. The group of farm and agri-business women visited the laboratories of faculty members Thomas Whittam and Muraleedharan Nair to learn about E. coli and phytochemicals respectively, and attended a short presentation by Director Ewen Todd and Deputy Director Ed Mather. Information and fact sheets the group received can be accessed at www.foodsafe.msu.edu



Faculty

Professor speaks to students, farmers

NFSTC Professor Thomas Whittam addresses the Farm Women's Symposium group in his lab. Whittam also spoke recently to the MSU Micro Club.



Faculty member elected as trustee

Norbert Kaminski, NFSTC faculty member, has recently been elected to the Board of Trustees for the International Life Sciences Institutes' Health and Environmental Sciences Institute (ILSI HESI). ILSI HESI was established in 1989 as a global branch of ILSI. Ewen Todd, NFSTC director, is also working with an ILSI committee on reduction of listeriosis cases in the United States.

Director speaks at Ag Outlook Forum

NFSTC Director Ewen Todd spoke on Feb. 20 at the Agricultural Outlook Forum in Washington, D.C., on "Emerging Issues and Global Markets" in a symposium convened by Elsa Murano, Under-secretary for Food Safety for USDA.

Professor's program of 20 most cited

John Giesy, NFSTC faculty member, was listed seventh in the top 20 most cited programs in Environment/Ecology for 1992-2002, out of almost 2,000 scientists. More information is available at www.in-cites.com/scientists/env-eco.html. Giesy has published some 478 papers since coming to MSU. In addition, Giesy has served on a National Academy of Science Committee entitled "Bioavailability of Contaminants in Soils and Sediments." The results of three years of writing and discussions have been published as a book. Giesy is currently on sabbatical at the Biology and Chemistry Department of the University of Hong Kong.

Professor on sabbatical in Denmark

Linda Mansfield, faculty member of the NFSTC and Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, is currently on sabbatical in Copenhagen, Denmark. She returns in September.

Register for the First World Congress on Food Irradiation
ONLINE at <http://www.foodsafe.msu.edu/Congress/Congress.html>
May 5-7, McCormick Place, Chicago

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