

University/Food Industry  
Partnerships for Human Resource  
Development and Technology  
Transfer

Roy G. Arnold  
Executive Associate Dean  
College of Agricultural Sciences  
Oregon State University

# Traditional examples

- Advisory input
- Career information
- Scholarship support
- Guest lectures
- Educational tours and field trips
- Internships / work experience
- Student projects

## Traditional examples (cont.)

- Employment of graduates
- Faculty and student awards
- Research support (grants, contracts)
- Licensing of inventions
- Professional development programs
- Scientific/professional organizations (e.g., IFT)

# Newer partnerships/alliances

- Formal research cooperatives
- Food industry centers at universities

# Factors driving new alliances

- University perspective: limited public funding for research
- Industry perspective: limited dollars for research resulting from mergers, downsizing, debt load

# Food industry center examples

- Carnegie Mellon University: Spray Systems Technology Center
- Cornell University: New York State Food Venture Center
- Kansas State University: KSU Extrusion Center
- Michigan State University: Food Industry Institute

# Food industry center examples

- North Carolina State University: Dairy Foods Research Center, and Center for Aseptic Processing and Packaging Studies
- Oklahoma State University: Oklahoma Food and Agricultural Products and Technology Center
- Ohio State University: Food Industries Center

# Food industry center examples

- Oregon State University: Food Innovation Center
- Rutgers University: Center for Advanced Food Technology
- University of Georgia: Center for Food Safety and Quality Enhancement
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln: Food Processing Center

# Variety of roles and services

- Clientele focus
- Basic research
- Technical assistance
- Product and process development
- Processing technologies/pilot plant facilities
- Analytical services

# Variety of roles and services

- Commodity/food product focus
- Marketing and business plan assistance
- Networking with suppliers
- Involvement of government partners
- Regulatory information
- Confidentiality policies
- Employee training

# Elements of success

- Active industry advisory group
- Membership models
- Flexible university polities
- High trust levels
- University reward structure
- Faculty culture

# Beneficial outcomes: University partner

- Financial support (grants, contracts, fees)
- Stronger connection to industry
  - research focus
  - educational program influence
  - student project opportunities
  - faculty development opportunities

# Beneficial outcomes: Industry partners

- Access to expertise precisely matched to goals and objectives
- Opportunity to build powerful teams
- Fluid arrangements
- Avoid long term personnel and capital investments for research projects
- Contact with students/potential future employees

# UN-L's Food Processing Center

- Integrated food processing and marketing
- Initially in-state, small and emerging business focus
- Industry advisory council
- State government involvement (Economic Development)
- Food Industry Association established

# Lessons learned in Nebraska

- Underestimated demand and projected levels of program activity
- National firms and larger companies also utilizing technical services and facilities
- High demand for marketing related and business planning services
- Evolution of faculty views regarding Center

# References

- Giese, James. 1999. University Centers Ease Product Development. *Food Technology* 53 (11): 98.
- Hollingsworth, Pierce. 1998. Economic Reality Drives Industry-University Alliances. *Food Technology* 52 (7): 58.