

On the Bayou

APRIL 2019



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Message from the Director

Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar

Significant Items of Interest

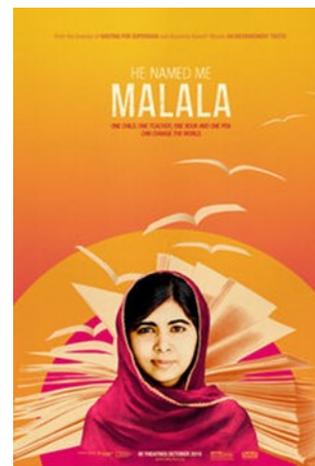
- A well-deserved Congratulations to all at SRRS for completing the 2019 IT Security Awareness training prior to the deadline, and to all the SYs for completing their ORCID registrations.
- The President's 2020 budget for ARS: Although USDA's budget has nearly 15% in cuts, ARS budget has more like a 3.3% cut. These cuts do not affect SRRS or Southeast Area. The proposed budget reductions include the closure of three ARS laboratories/locations/worksites totaling \$39.3 million. These do not include the earlier proposed closures such as Peoria lab/ Houma, but include Human Nutrition labs in Tulsa, Houston, and Arkansas.
- Mid-year reviews are forthcoming. We have to complete these reviews by April 10th. Supervisors should be collecting their employees' narratives so that performances can be discussed. PAPs should be carefully read so that appropriate narratives may be prepared and meaningful discussions with supervisors can be made.
- The recent internal safety inspection summary showed a few deficiencies. Most of the problems were with missing eyewash and shower inspections – although most were only missing one or two inspections. In addition, many labs had their WZSP approved more than a year ago. WZSPs need to be up dated each year, and if there are no changes, our Safety Officer can approve them on an annual basis. All of us need to do a better job of meeting our basic safety requirements. Please see to it that these deficiencies are addressed immediately because the Area safety inspection is just around the corner.

Women's History Month Celebration

Submitted by: Shannon Beltz

The SRRC Women's History Month Committee hosted the screening of the film, **He Named Me Malala** on March 27.

The film presented the young Pakistani female activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai, who has spoken out for the right to education, since she was very young. The film also recounts how she miraculously survived after being hunted down and shot by a Taliban gunman as part of the organization's violent opposition to girls' education in the Swat Valley in Pakistan.



Staff enjoyed delicious snacks, drinks, and coffee provided by the Committee.



SRRC Visitors

Submitted by: Thomas Klasson

SRRC hosted visitors from China, sponsored by U.S. Department of State through the DOS' International Visitor Leadership Program on March 25. The visitors were Professor Rui Li from Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Ms. Zhang Rong, Manager for the Dalian Yiu Information Consulting Company. They were accompanied by their translator.

Center Director, Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar gave a warm welcome and a short presentation about ARS and SRRC. All visitors were then escorted by Dr. Thomas Klasson on a Center tour that included the research labs of Drs. John Beaulieu, Steve Boue, Heping Cao, Casey Grimm, and Kanniah Rajasekaran. The visit ended with a presentation by Professor Li on the research activities at Chengdu University.

Events and Observances (cont.)

Upcoming Events

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day

Submitted by: Darlene Downey

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day will be held on **Monday, April 22nd** this year.

We hope to have some new and fun demonstrations this year, as well as some that the kids always enjoy. Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day is always a favorite event for staff, parents, and children.

Earth Day 2019

Submitted by: Cathy Mason

Our Center will be celebrating Earth Day on **Thursday, April 25**. The 2019 theme for the National celebration is “Protect Our Species”.

We have decided to address that theme by converting one of the existing drainage ditches on our campus to a rain garden/swale. A rain garden acts to slow down the flow of water after a heavy rain, allowing that water to percolate through the soil instead of rushing down into our drainage pipes and roads. The plants we have chosen have the ability to withstand the flooded conditions without severe damage.



The rain garden will be populated with a number of native species which will help to attract and support many different butterflies, bees and birds in our area. Our native blue flag iris once covered the entire area surrounding our campus, but is now struggling with habitat loss. Our Monarch butterflies have also declined over the past few decades, also due to habitat loss for the host plants. Although our garden will initially be populated by small plants, they will grow over the next few years and should give us flowers, birds and insects to enjoy for many years.

I hope you will enjoy the garden as it grows in the future months and years!



Louisiana Iris



Milkweed

We will have our traditional Plant and Book Swap on that day, so please start preparing to bring in items to share!

FSIS Food Safety Workshop

Submitted by: **Kanniah Rajasekaran**

Scientists Jeff Cary, P.K. Chang, Matt Lebar, K. Rajasekaran, Geromy Moore, and Brian Mack of the Food and Feed Safety Research Unit attended the USDA/ARS/FSIS Food Safety Workshop at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV on February 19-22, 2019.

Dr. James Lindsay, NPL 108 organized this meeting in collaboration with Food Safety and Inspection Service. All the FFSRU scientists presented a research progress update on their CRIS projects and had ample opportunities to interact with Dr. Lindsay. The meeting went well and it offered a valuable opportunity for all scientists in food and feed safety projects nationwide to interact and discuss current and future collaboration.

Submitted by: **Mike Dowd**

Cotton research planning session

In preparation for the upcoming National Program 306 OSQR Project Review, Vince Edwards, Doug Hinchliffe, Chris Delhom, Brian Condon, Thomas Klasson and Michael Dowd attended a cotton research planning session with our National Program Leaders, Gene Lester and Mike Buser on March 21, 2019.

The topics discussed included cotton chemistry and fiber quality research, application and use of cotton non-wovens, and utilization of cottonseed. The session was hosted by Cotton, Inc. in Cary, NC and was also attended by several members of Cotton, Inc., the National Cotton Council and commercial stakeholders.

Upcoming AEIC Meeting

AEIC (Analytical Excellence through Industry Collaboration) 2019 Spring Meeting will be held in New Orleans on April 10-11, 2019. One of the main topics of the meeting is research and promotion activity for uses of cotton and cotton crop engineering. Several SRRC scientists will be making presentations at the meeting:

David Fang: Improving cotton fiber through molecular and genomic approaches

Mike Dowd: Potential for Low Gossypol Cotton

Jay Shockey: USDA gene editing in cotton for oil improvement

Kanniah Rajasekaran: Broad-spectrum control of pathogenic and mycotoxigenic fungi in transgenic cotton expressing a synthetic peptide

The attendees will tour SRRC to conclude their meeting on April 11.

April Scientific Meetings

Submitted by: Terri Von Hoven

| | |
|----------------|---|
| April 3-5 | Single-Molecule Sensors and NanoSystems International Conference, Munich, Germany |
| April 6-9 | American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Orlando, FL |
| April 8-9 | Polymorphism and Crystallization Conference, Boston, MA |
| April 9-11 | 9th Africa Sugar Outlook, Nairobi, Kenya |
| April 9-10 | Starch Convention & Bioethanol & Bioconversion Meeting, Detmold, Germany |
| April 10-11 | 15th Bioethanol and Bioconversion Technology Meeting, Detmold, Germany |
| April 10-11 | AEIC 2019 Spring Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana |
| April 15-17 | World Nanotechnology Conference, Dubai, UAE |
| April 30-May 3 | Australian Society of Sugar Cane Technologists Conference, Toowoomba, Australia |

Delgado Student Intern Program

Submitted by: Deepak Bhatnagar

We are starting a new student intern program in coordination with Delgado Community College. Several of you attended the presentation by the Delgado staff regarding this program and we are ready to get the program off the ground. We may have some growing pains as we move forward, so everyone needs to be patient.

First, I have asked Jacqueline Nesbit (Room 2130, x393) to be the Coordinator for this program on behalf of SRRC, and she has kindly agreed. If you have any questions about the program, please contact her (Jacqueline.Nesbit@ARS.USDA.GOV).

The next step is to assign a student to interested scientists. For that you will need to fill out the appropriate form and return it to Jacque at your earliest convenience. She will then take that information to Delgado, and they will try to match a student based on the information you have provided on that form. You may also mention on that form the time frame that will be most appropriate for you to mentor.

I think this is an excellent opportunity for us to give back to our community by providing an invaluable opportunity to those that may not have such access.

Submitted by: Shannon Beltz

Annual Safety Inspection - May 14-16

Our SEA Safety & Health Manager Shelia Parker will be visiting SRRC on **May 14-16, 2019**. She will be performing her annual inspection at this time, going in to each lab and workspace. The Safety Office will be sending out pre-inspection checklists to help us all be ready for her visit. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have ANY questions regarding lab safety protocols (JHAs, WZSPs, hazardous waste, PPE, signage, etc). We look forward to another great visit!

Chemical Hygiene Inspections – April 18, 19

Our biannual Chemical Hygiene Inspections are scheduled for this month. In preparation for the inspection, please take a few minutes to look over your chemicals and check them for aging containers, proper segregation, and secondary containers. Remember that sorting your chemicals **ONLY** by alphabetizing them is not proper chemical segregation. Please remember that we do these inspections in order to promote safe chemical hygiene and chemical storage, and they are not intended to be punitive. If you have any questions before the inspections, please feel free to contact Michal Easson, Elena Graves, or Shannon Beltz.

Update your Chemical Inventory

Recently, an email was sent out with a link to the chemical inventory for SRRC:

<http://nola.srrc.usda.gov:8000/safety/Quantity.xls>

We will be soon be requesting that everyone download and print the inventory for your work zone(s), and make sure that a copy is available in the lab. Please take the time to verify that your inventory is correct and up to date. We will be sending out a guide to help deal with any items that are not on your list or are not in your lab.

Occupational Medical Surveillance Program (OMSP)

The OMSP is a valuable program which examines authorized employees to establish health-status baselines and detect work-related physiological changes (if any) throughout the employee's career. The OMSP is designed for the detection of occupationally medical abnormalities. Those of you who are potentially or actually exposed to harmful agents, biological hazards, and/or physical hazards are strongly encouraged to participate in the OMSP which is required to be offered annually.

This is for **YOUR** benefit and everyone is strongly encouraged to participate! We will have a new provider this year for our OMSP services.

Participation forms will be sent out in the very near future. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to reach out to Shannon or Janell.

Security Awareness/Active Shooter Training held on March 28

The SRRC Safety Office recruited two Federal Protective Service agents to come to our facility and offer **Security Awareness/Active Shooter Training** for all of our employees.

While this was not mandatory, staff was highly encourage to attend and get current information on how to handle these sorts of emergencies. Quick thinking is critical in these situations, so arm yourself with accurate information and know the best response. A second session will be organized in the near future.

Community Recognition

Greg Ford of the Food and Feed Safety Research Unit has done it again!

Greg donated fish to feed thousands of St. Joseph's Altar visitors.

As an avid recreational fisherman, Greg spends much of his spare time on the waters of Louisiana catching speckled trout and redfish. After attending an annual event known to local New Orleanians as the St. Joseph's Day Altar, and realizing the event was put on by an all-volunteer group, Greg was inspired to help out. The Altar welcomes all people and provides a free meal for all. It brings people together from all walks of life. The food is all donated and home cooked, including the delicious desserts. Volunteers feed about two thousand visitors to the St. Joseph's Altar. Fried fish is a local favorite and always on the menu, and for the past several years, Greg has donated over one hundred pounds of speckled trout and redfish filets each year to St. Stephen Church for their Altar. Throughout the year, Greg catches and cleans fish, vacuum seals all filets, and stores them in his freezer until it's time to bring them to St. Stephen Church.

Greg is seen here with Hunter Harris, St. Joseph's Day organizer and chef at St. Stephen's Church. Hunter is Greg's lifelong friend and '2nd dad'.



Community Recognition

Scott Pelitire of the Commodity Utilization Research Unit ran The Best Damn Race Half Marathon on Sunday, March 24th.

The course wound through areas of Downtown, the Garden District, Esplanade Ave., and Bayou St. John on a picture perfect day. Scott did his best, and finished with a time of 1:49:09. He was 65th out of 342 males and 86th out of 859 overall racers. Keep up the good work! We are proud of you.



New Employees

Submitted by: Janell Becker

Please welcome three new employees to SRRC:

Charles Escude is a Physical Science Technician working with Christopher Delhom in the Cotton Structure and Quality Research Unit.

Sonia Chavez is a student intern in the Cotton Chemistry Utilization Research Unit. She will be working with Dr. Sunghyun Nam.

Ashli Olson will be working with Dr. Isabel Lima. Ashli is a student intern in the Commodity Utilization Research Unit.



Human Resource Corner (cont.)

Death of Former Employee

Shirley T. Saucier passed away on January 17, 2019. She was 95 years old. She worked at SRRC as both a Federal employee and a contractor for almost 40 years. She will be missed by her surviving children. Shirley's proudest accomplishment was raising and providing for her six children after losing her husband at an early age. She loved working at SRRC and missed it immensely upon retiring. Employees at the Center loved working with her. She was very delightful, helpful, compassionate and the ultimate professional. Shirley was possibly the Saints' biggest fan.



New Orleans and Louisiana Area Events

Submitted by: Terri Von Hoven

- 04/03/2019 - [New Orleans Wine and Food Experience](#)
- 04/04/2019 - [New Orleans Ragtime Festival](#)
- 04/06/2019 - [New Orleans Sacred Music Festival](#)
- 04/06/2019 - [Freret Street Festival](#)
- 04/11/2019 - [French Quarter Festival](#)
- 04/12/2019 - [Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival](#)
- 04/11/2019 - [Lake Charles Crawfish Festival](#)
- 04/20/2019 - [Crescent City Classic](#)
- 04/21/2019 - [Gay Easter Parade](#)
- 04/22/2019 - [Zurich Golf Classic](#)
- 04/24/2019 - [Festival International 2019](#)
- 04/25/2019 - [New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival](#)

Recycle Dates: April 11 and 25



Recent SRRC Publications

Submitted by: Suhad Wojkowski

Full text pdfs of SRRC publications are available in the Eprints database via “Library” link on the SRRC Intranet page: <http://nola.srrc.usda.gov:8000/srrcmenf.htm>

Click on the article’s title below to launch the pdf from Eprints.

Cao, Heping, and Sethumadhavan, Kandan and Li, Ke and Boue, Stephen M. and Anderson, Richard A. (2019) [*Cinnamon Polyphenol Extract and Insulin Regulate Diacylglycerol Acyltransferase Gene Expression in Mouse Adipocytes and Macrophages*](#). Plant Foods for Human Nutrition, 74. pp. 115-121.

Cheng, H.N. and Ford, Catrina and Kolpak, Francis J. and Wu, Qinglin (2018) [*Preparation and Characterization of Xylan Derivatives and Their Blends*](#). Journal of Polymers and the Environment, 26. pp. 4114-4123.

Cheng, H.N. and Wycoff, Wade and Dowd, Michael K. and He, Zhongqi (2019) [*Evaluation of Adhesion Properties of Blends of Cottonseed Protein and Anionic Water-Soluble Polymers*](#). Journal of Adhesion Science and Technology, 33 (1). pp. 66-78.

Klasson, K. Thomas (2018) [*The Inhibitory Effects of Aconitic Acid on Bioethanol Production*](#). Sugar Tech, 20 (1). pp. 88-94.

Li, Ming and Wang, Yimin and Liu, Ming and Liu, Qi and Xie, Zubin and Li, Zhongpei and Uchimiya, Minori and Chen, Yaozu (2019) [*Three-Year Field Observation of Biochar-Mediated Changes in Soil Organic Carbon and Microbial Activity*](#). Journal of Environmental Quality. doi:10.2134/jeq2018.10.0354

Ling, Zhe and Wang, Tuo and Makarem, Mohamadamin and Cintron, Michael Santiago and Cheng, H.N. and Kang, Xue and Bacher, Markus and Potthast, Antje and Rosenau, Thomas and King, Holly and Delhom, Christopher D. and Nam, Sunghyun and Edwards, J. Vincent and Kim, Seong H. and Xu, Feng and French, Alfred D. (2019) [*Effects of Ball Milling on the Structure of Cotton Cellulose*](#). Cellulose, 26. pp. 305-328.

Liu, Yongliang and Kim, Hee Jin (2019) [*Comparative Investigation of Secondary Cell Wall Development in Cotton Fiber Near Isogenic Lines Using Attenuated Total Reflection Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy \(ATR FT-IR\)*](#). Applied Spectroscopy, 73 (3). pp. 329-336.

Peralta, Donna V. and Thibodeaux, Devron P. and Delhom, Christopher D. and Rodgers, James E. and Boykin, Deborah L. (2019) [*Approaches to Quantitating the Results of Differentially Dyed Cottons*](#). Textile Research Journal, 89 (7). pp. 1321-1331.

Tao, Feifei and Yao, Haibo and Hruska, Zuzana and Liu, Yongliang (2019) [*Use of Visible–Near-Infrared \(Vis-NIR\) Spectroscopy to Detect Aflatoxin B1 on Peanut Kernels*](#). Applied Spectroscopy. doi:10.1177/0003702819829725

Uchimiya, Minori and Franzluebbers, Alan J. and Liu, Zhongzhen and Lamb, Marshall C. and Sorensen, Ronald B. (2019) [*Detection of Biochar Carbon by Fluorescence and Near-Infrared-Based Chemometrics*](#). Aquatic Geochemistry, 24 (5-6). pp. 345-361.

Uchimiya, Minori and Knoll, Joseph E. (2019) [*Rapid Data Analytics to Relate Sugarcane Aphid \[\(Melanaphis sacchari \(Zehntner\)\] Population and Damage on Sorghum \(Sorghum bicolor \(L.\) Moench\)*](#). Scientific Reports, 9 (370). pp. 1-10.