



**IN OUR GRIT,
OUR GLORY.**

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Updates from the Department of Food Science and Technology

January, 2025



FROM THE DESK OF DR. MARTINI

Happy New Year! Welcome back! I hope you all had a great time during the Holidays and had a chance to relax and enjoy time with family and friends. I am excited about the opportunities that this new year will bring and with the exciting things that are happening in the Department. Perhaps the most exciting event is the Spring retreat that is coming up on January 13th. This retreat will start in the morning for faculty members only where we will discuss strategic planning, and bylaws. Staff, students, and post-docs will join us for lunch and we will then dig into the afternoon program with a diversity and inclusion talk and an introduction to the Gallup Strengths assessment and a talk about health and wellness. We will finish the retreat with some brainstorming about what “extraordinary” means to all of us. Susie and I have been working very hard on this, so we are hoping that you will all enjoy the program.

I also have a few announcements. We have made some changes regarding room reservations. To summarize the changes, Susie and Julie Reiling oversee most of the room reservations, except for labs and other specific rooms. So, if you need to reserve a room, and you don't know who to contact, just send us an e-mail and we will point you in the right direction.

This semester (pre-spring term) we are offering the “Fundamentals of Beer Brewing and Analysis” course for the second time. We are excited about this, and we are hoping we can offer it again next year during the regular spring term.

For faculty, please remember that the materials for faculty evaluations are due on January 15th and January 22nd! Also remember that we have an RFP out for a dairy-based proposal... I am hoping we receive some good proposals to do some innovative and interesting research on dairy!

Thank you all for being part of this department. I am excited about the future and the opportunities ahead!

I hope you will all have a great semester!

Silvana

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The Year of the Snake

Lunar New Year 2025, also known as Chinese New Year or Spring Festival, marks the beginning of the Year of the Snake. In 2025, Lunar New Year falls on January 29th. The celebrations typically last for 16 days, starting from New Year's Eve and culminating with the Lantern Festival.

KEY TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS:

- ◇ **Red Decorations:** Homes and streets are adorned with red lanterns, couplets, and other decorations. Red is believed to ward off evil spirits and bring good luck.
- ◇ **Family Reunions:** Families gather for a reunion dinner on New Year's Eve, often considered the most important meal of the year.
- ◇ **Firecrackers and Fireworks:** These are set off to scare away evil spirits and welcome the new year with a bang.
- ◇ **Giving Red Envelopes:** Known as "hongbao" in Chinese, these envelopes contain money and are given to children and unmarried adults to wish them good luck.
- ◇ **Lion and Dragon Dances:** These traditional dances are performed to bring prosperity and chase away evil spirits.

THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE:

The Snake is the sixth animal in the Chinese zodiac cycle. People born in the Year of the Snake are believed to be wise, intuitive, and graceful. The Snake's energy is associated with transformation and personal growth, making 2025 a year for introspection and renewal.

CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD:

This vibrant and meaningful festival is celebrated by millions around the world. Each country has its unique customs and traditions, but the core values of family, renewal, and good fortune remain the same.



BUILDING BETTER TEAMS: HR INSIGHTS

- Effective 1/1/2025, Nebraska's minimum wage rate increased to \$13.50/hour. All existing hourly employees earning less than \$13.50/hour automatically received a rate adjustment effective 1/1/2025.

Duplicate W-2 or 10425 Tax Forms can be requested after 2/10/2025. Email Terri Hutchison for the request form. UNL Payroll requires 10-days processing plus USPS mail delivery if requesting forms prior to 2023. Requests for 2023 or 2024 Tax Forms can be emailed. UNL Payroll requires 5-days processing.



- Search Committee Training – Please confirm you are Search Committee certified.
 - ◇ Firefly>ESS Tile>About Me Tile>Training/Certification/Awards
- Update your Objects On Loan if you have purchased equipment valuing more than \$2,000 within the past year or if you have sent equipment to Inventory and need it removed from your official record.

THE FACULTY FORUM: HIGHLIGHTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

News from Ozan Ciftci:

Exciting news from me! My NSF Global Centers project, FoodID: Global Center for Food Innovation and Diversification to Advance the Bioeconomy, has officially been funded with a total project budget of \$14 million. NSF's Global Centers Program aims to solve global challenges, especially through bioeconomy. In these projects, top research organizations from five countries develop solutions that support a climate-neutral future.

Jointly supported by NSF, Business Finland, and five Finnish food companies, FoodID aims to revolutionize the future of food by developing sustainable, alternative protein and lipid sources from specially designed plants and microorganisms. This ambitious project addresses key technological, environmental, and social challenges, positioning UNL and Nebraska at the forefront of the global food bioeconomy. By addressing technological, environmental, nutritional, and social challenges, FoodID seeks to diversify food production, catalyze business innovation, inform policymaking, and enhance consumer acceptance while empowering the next generation to shape the future food bioeconomy workforce. This project will enable research in crop genetic engineering, microbial biotechnology, food engineering, AI, system dynamics modeling, sustainability, and social and consumer sciences. Our collaboration with partners in Finland and collaborators in Canada, the UK, and Japan will leverage globally recognized expertise, infrastructure, and industry networks, including 19 universities and more than 40 industry, research institutions, and non-profit organizations collaborators worldwide.

Getting involved in these future-changing, international breakthrough projects is a great honor and a valuable recognition for our cutting-edge bioeconomy research, where we are at the top of the world. Our role is to bring US and Finnish industrial biotechnology, bioprocess, and biomanufacturing expertise and technology to the program along with our partners and collaborators. FoodID's ability to scale technology from the laboratory to a pilot environment is a valuable advantage enabling us to develop the industrialization of bioprocesses. Our cooperation with NSF and other international actors strengthens Nebraska's position as a bioeconomy pioneer.

Exciting News!

Other News:

- Dr. Ozan Ciftci was elected the new Society of Food Engineering (SoFE) Secretary.

- Dr. Ozan Ciftci was elected to the Steering Committee of the USDA multistate project NC1023 Food Engineering for Food Safety and Quality.

THE FACULTY FORUM: HIGHLIGHTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Recent Publications

McFarland, C., B. Alkotaini, C. P. Cowen, M. G. Edwards, E. Grein, A. D. Hahn, J. C. Jennings, R. Patnaik, S. M. Potter, L. T. Rael, B. P. Sharkey, S. L. Taylor, R. Totman, K. Van Simaey, P. Vo, D. Zhao, and D. Connors. 2024. Discovery, expression and in silico safety evaluation of honey truffle sweetener, a sweet protein derived from *Mattirolomyces terfezioides* and produced by heterologous expression in *Komagataella phaffii*. *J. Agr. Food Chem.* 72:19470-19479.

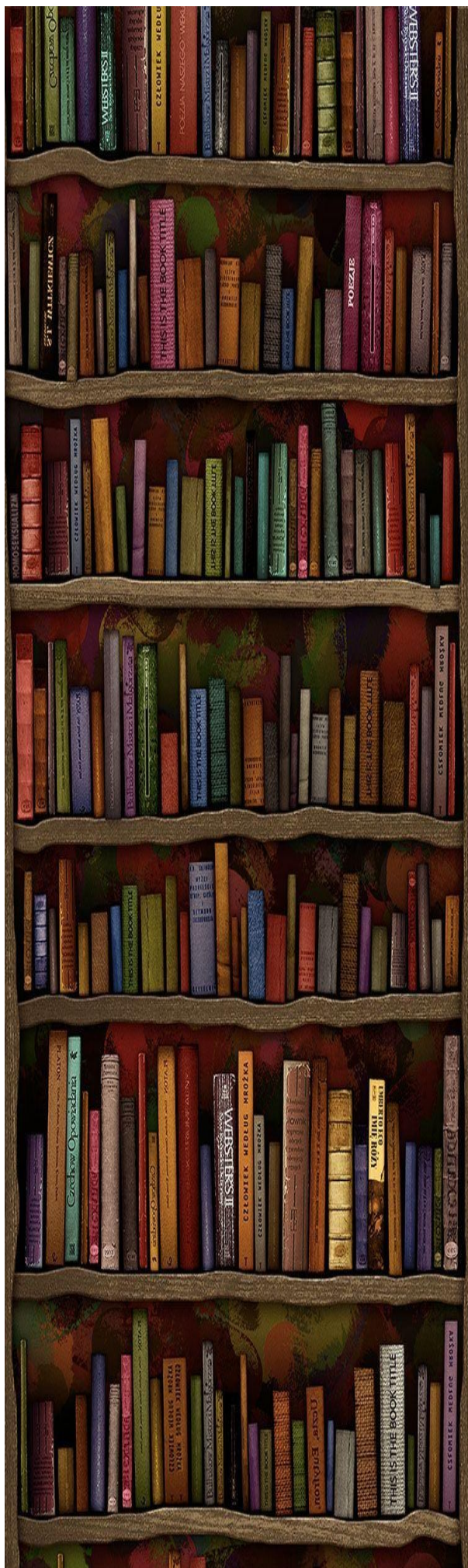
Taylor, S. L., and J. L. Baumert. 2024. Food additives, contaminants, and natural toxicants – maintaining a safe food supply. In: *Modern Nutrition in Health & Disease*, 12th ed., ed. K. L. Tucker, A. C. Ross, G. L. Jensen, K. E. Peterson, R. Touger-Decker, and C. P. Duggan, Jones & Bartlett Learning, Burlington, MA, pp. 1531-1547.

Taylor, S. L., and J. L. Baumert. 2024. Food allergies and intolerances. In: *Modern Nutrition in Health & Disease*, 12th ed., ed. K. L. Tucker, A. C. Ross, G. L. Jensen, K. E. Peterson, R. Touger-Decker, and C. P. Duggan, Jones & Bartlett Learning, Burlington, MA, pp.1549-1564.

Dai, Q., S. Lemke, Y. Lu, S. Taylor, H. Li, S. Fu, X. Wu, N. Wang, T. Xue, and X. He. 2024. Food safety evaluation of recombinant humanized type III collagen produced by *Komagataella phaffii* SMD1168-2COL3. *J. Appl. Toxicol.* 0:1-22.



HAPPY NEW YEAR



Student Spotlight

Emerson Nolasco has been selected as the recipient of the 2025 AOCS Honored Student Award. The award recognizes outstanding graduate students conducting research in the field of fats, oils, proteins, surfactants, and related materials. This prestigious award includes a travel allowance and the opportunity to present their research at the AOCS 2025 Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon.

Congratulations!



SPOTLIGHT ON FST: THIS MONTH'S KEY MOMENTS

RECRUITING ROUNDUP: UPDATES AND INSIGHTS

January is a quieter month for recruiting events but a busy time with follow-up with our enrolled students. Phone calls to parents and students, Husker swag mailings to homes, and online orientations continue. It's also fundraising and scholarship season!

Recruiting/Outreach events this month:

Visiting us on the 22nd will be the FEWS2 group. They will tour FIC and engage in a food science activity. The FEWS2 group is a special cohort offered at Northeast high school in conjunction with CASNR. It is a STEM specific, early college career program. This is the group's 2nd year. To learn more about FEWS2, click below.

[Early College and Career STEM Program | College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources | Nebraska](#)

Partnering with LPS Culinary classes continues this month. The planning for 'phase 3' will continue and should result in a Culinary III immersion field trip here to FIC before the semester's end. This collaboration with LPS began last spring with the goal of connecting culinary students at LPS with our department. This provides awareness of the degree, careers associated with it, and a relationship with us right here at UNL!

January also brings the opportunity to present at the LPS teacher workshop on the 20th. Dr. Bianchini and Dr. Danao will provide three sessions; Tasty Perspectives: Science through the Lens of Food, Spice up your STEM lessons with Food Science, and It's Crunch Time: Unlocking the Magic of Freeze-Dried Foods.

CASNR and Omaha Public Schools have partnered to invite students from OPS to UNL. Three more schools will visit East Campus on Jan. 29 - 31st. The students will attend sessions with different departments. This gives us the opportunity to share Food Science with over 200 students across the 3 days.





Nebraska Food Processing Center



The wait is over! Emeritus is the name of our limited edition, Aged New York Cheddar and Aged Sharp Cheddar cheese! We've sealed these fine cheeses in wax and can be purchased separately, in a Nebraska-shaped gift basket or a gift box with Summer sausage from the Loeffel Meat Shoppe and crackers. These cheeses, aged over 2 years make a unique gift or a exquisite accompaniment to any holiday table. Available at the UNL Dairy Store while supplies last!



CUE THE *confetti*

AVAILABLE TODAY
IN THE DAIRY STORE!



1.



2.



3.



4.

ITEM

PRICE

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Emeritus Aged Sharp Cheddar, 8 oz | \$10.00 |
| 2. Emeritus Aged New York Cheddar, 8 oz | \$10.00 |
| 3. Emeritus Aged Cheddar Nebraska Basket | \$25.00 |
| 4. Emeritus Aged Cheddar Box, Sausage & Crackers | \$35.00 |



Farewell Wishers



Farewell and Best Wishes

January 16 we will say goodbye to Julie McManamey who is moving on to new opportunities. Over the years, her hard work, dedication, and professionalism have been greatly appreciated by all of us. She has been an integral part of our team, contributing significantly to our Grad Program and helping us achieve our goals.

Julie has always been someone we could rely on, whether it was for tackling challenging tasks, offering valuable insights, or simply being a supportive colleague. Her presence in the office has made a positive impact on everyone, and she will be missed.

As she embarks on this new journey, we want to express our gratitude for her contributions and teamwork. We have no doubt that Julie will excel in her future endeavors, just as she did here.

Thank you, Julie for everything you've done. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors. May your new role bring you success, fulfillment, and happiness.

Good luck and farewell!

wishing
you 
ALL THE BEST

WINTER WEATHER IS HERE– BE ‘ALERT’



When winter weather strikes, it can impact University of Nebraska–Lincoln operations in a number of ways. When inclement weather is in the forecast, students, faculty and staff should be prepared to complete assignments and/or work remotely. Here are a few things to help you navigate the Nebraska winters.

Be ‘alert’

UNL Alert — the same system that announces campus emergencies — will issue emails and text messages conveying weather-related closings. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to opt in to the service, which is free and available [here](#).

Trusted sources

The university announces official weather-related announcements (and schedule adjustments) in several ways beyond [UNL Alert](#):

They will be posted to the [university’s homepage](<https://www.unl.edu/>), as well as to the university’s social media channels such as [Twitter/X](#) and [Facebook](#).

- Ideally, local radio and TV stations will be notified about closures by 6 a.m. for day classes and 2 p.m. for night classes; and
- Closings of university sites outside of Lincoln will be made by a responsible administrator and communicated locally.