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December 2023



DEPARTMENT NEWS

Updates from the Department of Food Science and Technology and The Food Processing Center



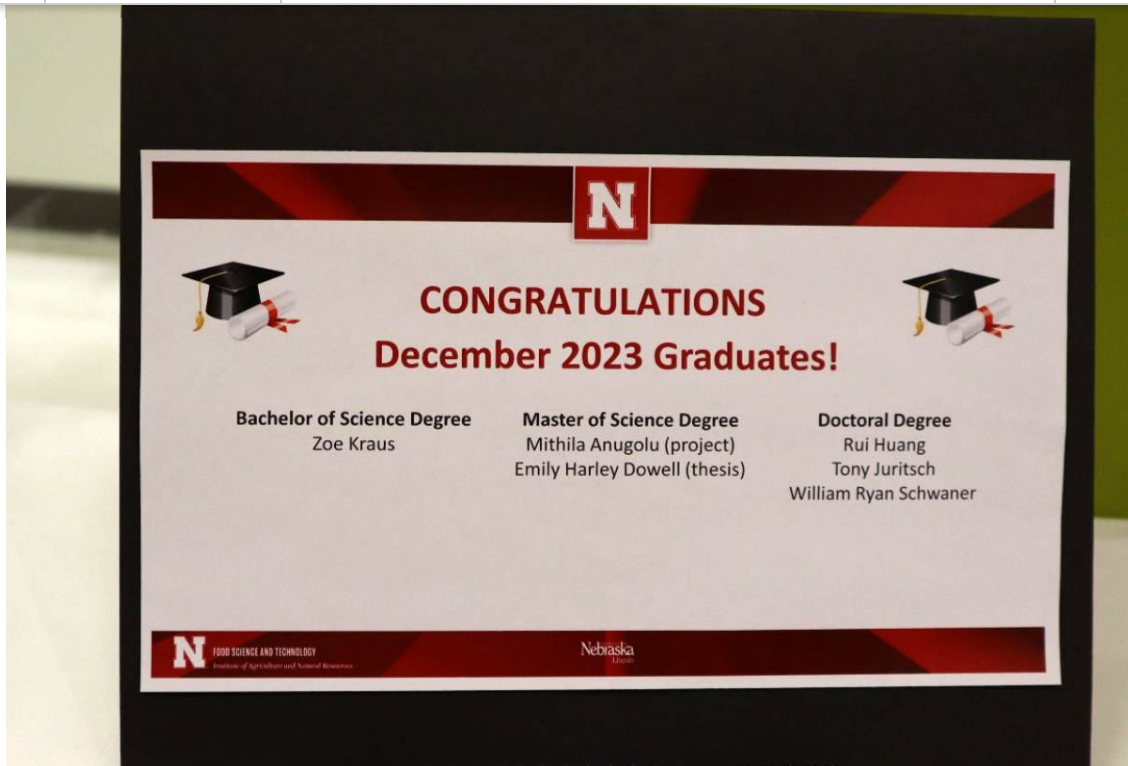
The Department of Food Science and Technology would like to wish all of our faculty, staff, and students happy holidays and thank you for your service and hard work this year. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in the new year.



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On November 29th, six graduate students mentored by department faculty members were honored at the Distinguished Graduate Fellowship Luncheon for their work and fellowship awards.

Pictured **La Fontaine Bahatsi** (Cooper/Sharpless Fellowship), **Prhashis Bose** (Majumder), **Willow Liu** (Milton E. Mohr Fellowship), **Yhuliana Nino Fuerte** (Milton E. Mohr Fellowship), **Blake Looi** (Cooper/Sharpless Fellowship), and **Lucas Townsend** (Cooper/Sharpless Fellowship)



On December 15, the Department held a Salute to Graduates to celebrate the accomplishments of our Fall 2023 graduating students. Graduate Program Coordinator, **Julie McManamey** managed the event which included snacks and holiday music. Congratulations to

Zoe Kraus (BS)

Mithila Angolu (MS)

Emily Harley Dowell (MS)

Rui Huang (PhD)

Tony Juritsch (PhD)

William Ryan Schwaner (PhD)

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the 3rd Annual UNL Microbiology Research Symposium Poster Presentation.



Dr. Bing Wang's lab was featured in Nebraska Today. Her lab uses advanced methods of computational analysis to contain food safety risks in the U.S. and worldwide. The methods used by Dr. Wang enable detailed food-risk analysis of each stage of field management and food processing. You can read the full article [here](#).



Food Science and Technology Extension Specialists attended the 2023 Fall Conference at Younes Conference Center in Kearney to learn more about Extension Programming - How It All Fits Together. (From left to right: **Drs. Joe Baumert, Bing Wang, Mary-Grace Danao, Andreia Bianchini, Melanie Downs, and Byron Chaves.**)

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the North American Mycological Association, was quoted in an article from [cbsnews.com](#) regarding a recent food poisoning outbreak in Montana that stemmed from morel mushrooms. You can read the full article [here](#).

Recruitment Corner

During the fall semester, our department has engaged in 17 recruitment activities led by **Dr. Andreia Bianchini, Dr. Jayne Stratton, and Dr. Heather Hallen-Adams** with support from other faculty and students. These activities served more than 130 students.

Throughout the semester, Dr. Hallen-Adams attended several **Red Letter Days events**, where prospective students get to interact with current students and learn about different opportunities and majors at UNL. She also participated in numerous **Power of Red Visits** where students learn how the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) prepares them for their future professional careers. Finally, she also engaged in various **Distinguish Scholar** events, when UNL recognizes top Nebraska high school seniors for their academic excellence.

On September 20, graduate student

On the 7th and 22nd of November, a team of graduate students and faculty led by Dr. Bianchini engaged 95 students ages 5 – 15 who attended the **4H Homeschoolers Science Day**, with an exciting activity titled "The Science of Boba". Dr. Bianchini captivated children's curiosity by explaining how our senses connect with food. Through interactive and hands-on demonstrations, she delved into the fascinating science behind taste, touch, and smell, sparking the young minds' interest in the sensory aspects of their favorite treats. As the atmosphere buzzed with excitement, Dr. Bianchini explored the intricate science behind the popular boba pearls. The children and their parents were captivated as they learned about the chemistry of boba making and tasted some treats. "The Science of Boba" inspired a newfound appreciation for the senses and ignited a passion for the scientific wonders hidden in everyday treats. For these events, Dr. Bianchini was helped by graduate students Jaber Ghorbani, Ram Shrestha, Emi Dowel, and Liya Mo, as well as intern Carmen Sabillon

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Annual Multicultural Night at Lincoln Northeast High School. During these events, students shared their culture and engaged with organizations to learn about the opportunities available to them in our community.

On October 23, Dr. Bianchini and Dr. Stratton, alongside graduate student Vanessa Whitmore and intern Carmen Sabillon Leiva, engaged 10 students, ages 14 to 15, from **Parkview Christian Schools** in a food science day field trip. The event delved into the world of food science, and the role food scientists play in various industries. Through videos and presentations, students learned the chemistry and safety of cookies and raw dough and the intricate process of harvesting and milling wheat. A highlight of the day involved students personally experiencing the fascinating chemistry of caramelization as they crafted their own caramel. The visit culminated in a hands-on activity, where students baked cookies, undertaking the challenge to articulate the distinctive role of each ingredient in the creation of this treat.

On October 24, Dr. Bianchini and Dr. Stratton hosted 24 students grades 9 – 12, in the **Exploring Food Science** event where students from Central Nebraska came to FIC to explore Food Science and Technology and Hospitality Management degrees. During their visit, students had the opportunity to make their own ice cream, tour our facilities, and talk about

The last event of this semester, hosted by Dr. Bianchini and Dr. Junsi Yang and supported by students Ram Shrestha, Mary Moran, and Chloe Colhoun, as well as intern Carmen Sabillon Leiva, was **The Food Science Scholarship Challenge** on December 4. This year 4 high school students were challenged to develop cupcakes that met current consumer demands, like gluten free or sugar free formulations. Their creations were compared to a standard control recipe, while measuring several sensory and quality attributes of the final products.

We would like to take a moment to appreciate the participation and support of all the students, staff and faculty involved in our recruitment activities. And remind you that your participation is needed to support all the activities we have planned for Spring 2024.

students Xinpeng Zhang and Yuchen Yan, along with intern Carmen Sabillon Leiva, helped with the preparations for this event.



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Upcoming Events

Dec 22 - Jan 1

Holiday Close Down (UNL offices closed)

Upcoming Workshops

Jan 20**Recipe to Reality**

Recent Publications

Arslain, K., Gustafson, C. R., Baishya, P., & Rose, D. J. (2021). Determinants of gluten-free diet adoption among individuals without celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity. *Appetite*, 156, 104958. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.104958>

Mutuyemungu E, Motta-Romero HM, Yang Q, Liu S, Liu S, Singh M, Rose DJ. *Megasphaera elsdenii*, a commensal member of the gut microbiota, is associated with elevated gas production during in vitro fermentation. *Gut Microbiome* in press.

Recent Awards

Sedoten Ogun, MAC Foundation Scholarship, \$1000

Jobs

Laboratory Coordinator (Grand Island, NE)

The Laboratory Coordinator position involves overall supervision of the laboratory. General duties include the following:

- Managing laboratory testing, including but not limited to: (i) analysis on foods, feeds, and grains; (ii) quality control analyses; and (iii) preparation of reagents
- Evaluation and approval of analytical results, including ensuring that work is completed in a timely manner
- Carrying out sample management procedures from receiving through final disposal

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