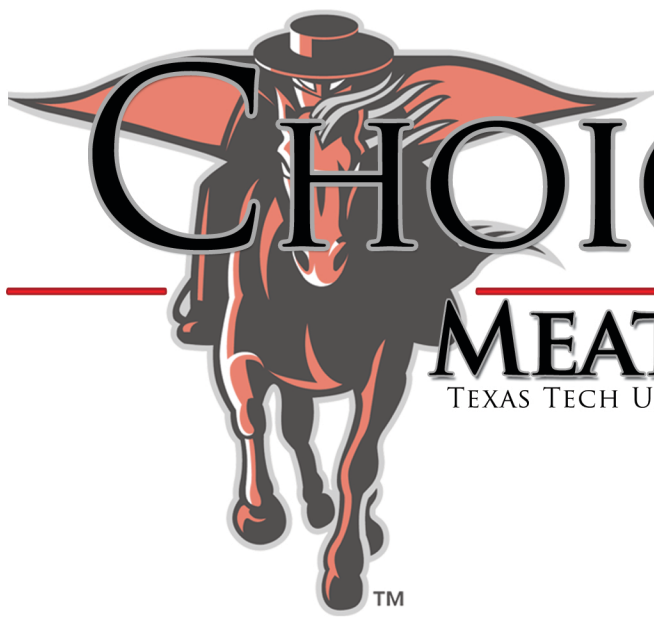


CHOICE NEWS

Holiday Edition

MEAT SCIENCE UPDATE

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY | ANIMAL AND FOOD SCIENCES | LUBBOCK, TEXAS



Texas Tech Meat Judging Team Wins National Championship

Texas Tech University is the newly crowned champion of intercollegiate meat judging. The team was named 2008 National Champion Intercollegiate Meat Judging Team at the recent international intercollegiate competition on Nov. 16 in Dakota City, Neb.

Other top finishers in the contest were South Dakota State University, Colorado State University, Texas A&M University and the University of Florida, which finished second through fifth, respectively.

"This win marks the team's fifth consecutive victory," said Mark Miller, professor of meat science and muscle biology. "They were able to reap the rewards of continually pursuing excellence by completing a perfect fall judging season."

Texas Tech won the beef grading, pork judging, lamb judging, specifications, reasons and total beef divisions, and finished fourth in the beef judging and placing divisions.

Team members were:

- Tyler Cowie, a junior from Magnolia, Texas
- Paden Daniels, a senior from Athol, Kansas
- Shayna Dunlap, a junior from Estancia, NM
- Ben Estes, a senior from Hollis, Okla.
- Matthew Morales, a senior from Santana, Kansas
- Heather Veltri, a junior from Ft. Collins, Colo.
- Shanna Ward, a junior from Coffeyville, Kansas

Four team members were recognized in the top-10 individuals overall. Daniels and Estes were named 2008 First Team All-American Team Members. Ward was named a 2008 Second Team All-American Team Member. Members of the All-American teams were selected based upon scholastic achievement and competition performance.

The team is coached by graduate students Jesse Collins and Justin Derington and supervised by Miller.

Earlier this season the Texas Tech team won the Cargill Meat Solutions High Plains Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest on Nov. 2 in Plainview, and earned a first-place finish Oct. 19 with a win at the American Royal in Omaha, Neb. Other honors include a win at the Eastern National on Oct. 4 in Pennsylvania, and a win at Houston Livestock Show contest last March.

Meat judging at Texas Tech dates back to 1938 when the school implemented a meat judging program in the Department of Animal Science. The first meat judging team to win national championship honors was in 1989. That national championship was followed by wins at the international contest in 1991, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2003 and 2008.



Seated, left to right: Shanna Ward, Shayna Dunlap and Heather Veltri. Standing, left to right: Coach Jesse Collins, Paden Daniels, Matthew Morales, Ben Estes, Tyler Cowie and Coach Justin Derington.

Congratulations to the December 2008 Meat Science Graduates!

Jesse Collins, MS
Justin Derington, MS

Heather Rogers, MS
Corri Rekow, MS





Graduate Student Spotlight: Clint Alexander

Adapted from a story published by the Texas Tech University Graduate School

I was raised on a family farm covering about 4,000 acres in southwest Kansas. We raised irrigated and dry-land wheat and grain sorghum, irrigated corn and alfalfa as well as stocker calves. Through the FFA program in Satanta, Kansas, I was a member of the State Champion Meats Judging Team as well as the State Champion Crops Judging Team. I was the recipient of the Star Greenhand Award (outstanding freshman), the Star Chapter Farmer (outstanding sophomore) as well as earning the State Farmer Degree in Kansas. I received two different Proficiency Awards multiple years, including Specialty Animal Production and Swine Production. For my involvement, I was awarded a National 4-H Scholarship through Ford - New Holland and a National FFA Scholarship for meats judging through Hormel & Co.

I am the son of Milton Alexander of rural Satanta, Kansas, and Sheila Middlebrooks, Oklahoma City, Okla., I am married to Paige (Johnson) Alexander, who is also currently attaining her Ph.D. from TTU in Animal Science.

I started my collegiate career at Garden City Community College in Garden City, Kansas. During my tenure there, I was a member of the 1993 Meats Judging Team, the 1994-95 Livestock-Meat Evaluation Team, Phi Theta Kappa and Student Government Association. I earned an Associate of Science degree in Animal Science and transferred to Texas Tech University in the Fall of 1995 majoring in Agricultural Education. I was a member of the 1996 TTU Meats Judging Team that won the National Championship, and I was named as the Doug Hardison Award winner for the most outstanding judging team member at Texas Tech for 1996. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Agriculture in 1998 and applied for graduate school. After completion of a quality assurance internship with IBP in Garden City, Kansas (now Tyson Fresh Meats), I started graduate school majoring in Animal Science with an emphasis in Meat Science and Muscle Biology in the fall of 1998.

During 1999, I was a coach of the TTU Meats Judging Team that also won the National Championship. I completed my thesis project, which was titled "Consumer Acceptability and Palatability of Youthful and Mature Ground Beef Prepared at Varying Lean Levels." I am currently working on revisions to have the research published in the Journal of Food Science. After completion of a Master of Science degree in August of 2000, I accepted a position with my alma mater at Garden City Community College teaching Animal and Food Science and coaching the Meat Judging Team.

In the spring of 2007, I decided to continue my education and applied for a sabbatical from GCCC to pursue a doctoral degree. After checking with many universities, I found that Texas Tech University was the only university willing to work with my time and other requirements. I was awarded an AT&T Chancellor's Fellowship in the fall of 2007. My research focus will be titled "Growth, Carcass Characteristics and Microbiological Differences between Natural and Conventionally Produced Beef." The major portion of this study will be to determine the differences in *Escherichia coli* between these types of cattle. With more emphasis at the consumer level being placed on natural or organic products, this project will help to validate if either group (natural or conventionally produced beef) is more prone to shedding pathogenic bacteria than the other. My major professor for my MS and Ph.D. degrees is Dr. Mark Miller, and I am focusing my PhD degree in Meat Science and Food Safety.

Texas Tech is a great institution of higher learning and I believe that I am the person I am today from those experiences in courses and with the outstanding professors at TTU. I would highly suggest any student that is interested in graduate school to consider Texas Tech University. It will be a choice that I believe they will not regret.

Texas Tech Welcomes Coordinator of Meat Science Programs

Moriah Beyers began serving as the Coordinator of Meat Science Programs in March 2008. She is responsible for coordinating the recruitment of meat science students, the development of promotional items such as brochures, newsletters and the Web site, and the supervision of alumni programs and events. She also assists with events that have local, state or national visibility for the Meat Science Program. Alumni are encouraged to contact Moriah with any requests or comments. Her e-mail address is moriah.beyers@ttu.edu.



Beyers earned a master's degree in agricultural communications from Texas Tech University in 2006 and an undergraduate degree in animal science from Texas A&M University in 2005. She was previously employed by a national crop insurance company where she was the coordinator of internal communications.

Moriah and her husband, Todd, reside in Littlefield, Texas, where he is employed by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service as the Lamb County Extension Agent.

*Happy Holidays from the
Meat Science Program!*

