

# CHOICE NEWS

*Winter Edition*

## MEAT SCIENCE UPDATE

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



### Tech team wins at Fort Worth meat judging contest

Texas Tech University's meat judging team proved it was the best as the team walked away with first place honors Jan. 30 at the competitive Southwestern Livestock Show's Meat Judging Contest in Fort Worth. The contest, hosted by the American Meat Science Association in conjunction with the Fort Worth stock show, is the first win of 2011 for the sixteen-member team.

The Red Raiders dominated the competition, taking the top spot by a 47-point margin and posting a score of 4,133 points. They finished first in beef judging and overall beef. Other top finishers, in placement order, were South Dakota State University, Oklahoma State University, University of Wyoming, and Kansas State University. Twelve universities competed at the contest.

"This was an exciting win for the 2011 team," said Mark Miller, professor and San Antonio Livestock Show Distinguished Chair in Meat Science. "The group worked hard to earn their first win."

Three of the top-ten individuals and nine of the top-ten alternates were from Texas Tech. Dakota Williams, a sophomore from Glenrose, was high individual overall. He was followed closely by teammate Travis Begley, a sophomore from Plainview, who finished second overall. Zach Smith, a sophomore from Sweetwater, was seventh overall. The high individual award in the alternate division was won by Drew Cashman, a sophomore from New Windsor, MD.

Other team members include:

Blaine Corliss, a junior from Estancia, NM  
Cody Helms, a junior from Cleburne  
Faith Jurek, a sophomore from Goldthwaite  
Mandy-Jo Laurent, a sophomore from Nacogdoches  
Jerra McMath, a junior from Estancia, NM  
Andrea Nordman, a junior from Florence  
Craig Russell, a junior from Visalia, Calif.  
Natalee Smith, a junior from Albemarle, NC  
Cody Sultenfuss, a sophomore from Little-River Academy  
Tyler Travis, a sophomore from Pleasant Valley  
Kaitlyn True, a sophomore from Plainview  
Amanda White, junior from Garden City, Kan.

The team is coached by Texas Tech graduate student Shanna Ward and Miller.



The contest was held at Columbia Packing Company in Dallas. The team will compete again at the Houston Livestock Show on March 5.

### Brooks to be presented two scientific awards at Corpus ASAS-Southern Section

A standout Texas Tech animal science professor will be honored with two major awards on Feb. 8 at the annual meeting of the American Society of Animal Science-Southern Section in Corpus Christi. Program officials noted that Tech's Chance Brooks "is an innovative researcher who has made outstanding contributions to the livestock industry."

Brooks, an associate professor of meat science with Tech's Department of Animal and Food Sciences, will accept the 2010 Outstanding Young Animal Scientist Award in Research and 2011 Outstanding Young Animal Scientist Award in Education.

In addition to his teaching duties, Brooks' research focuses on value-added meat products, meat packaging systems, food safety, and meat palatability. He has secured more than \$2.7 million in extramural funding since 2000.

His teaching innovations include development of a public food show for his processed meats class and created the first honors course in meat science at Texas Tech in 2005. In addition, Brooks advises more than 100 undergraduate students and serves on the committees of 21 graduate students.

Prior to joining the Texas Tech faculty in 2003, Brooks served as an assistant professor at Oklahoma State University. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science from Texas Tech University. His doctorate is in animal science from Texas A&M.

## Top science association cites collaborative R&D food safety research project *by Norman Martin*

A group of food safety scientists from Texas Tech University are part of an international team that will be recognized on Feb. 15 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington D.C. The research group will be honored with an "Exemplary Research and Development Collaborations: Agriculture, Food, Nutrition, and Natural Resources Award."

The research team developed a collaborative approach that improved safety of meat products in Mexico, said Mindy Brashears, director of Tech's International Center for Food Industry Excellence. Among pre-school children in Mexico, food-borne disease is the principal cause of mortality, while in children 5 to 14 years of age it is the tenth leading cause of death.

"The long term impact will be on public health by providing safer products in Mexico for internal consumption, tourists and for export to the United States and other countries," Brashears said.

Among the project's objectives were to determine the microbiological baseline contamination levels for E. coli O157:H7 and salmonella in beef and pork products in supermarkets and in city meat markets covering a variety of retailers and vendors in Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey.

Texas Tech officials noted that the increased United States-Mexico scientific partnerships have led to increasing technical expertise in Mexico – both with academia and industry – and increased U.S. trade access to Mexico markets. The effort also led to a safer product for use within Mexico and export from Mexico, thanks in part to the decreased prevalence of pathogens in the final product.

Among the groups involved in the long-term project, which began in February of 2009, were:

- Texas Tech Department of Animal and Food Sciences
- Texas Tech Department of Agricultural Education and Communications
- Texas Tech International Center for Food Industry Excellence
- West Texas A&M University
- University of Nebraska
- United States Meat Export Federation
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico
- Mexican Meat Council
- Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan

Among the primary team members from Texas Tech are Mindy Brashears, Professor; Mark Miller, Professor; Todd Brashears, Associate Professor; Kevin Pond, Professor; and Alejandro Echeverry, Research Assistant Professor.

The AAAS, the largest organization of scientists in the country, is an international non-profit organization dedicated to advancing science around the world by serving as an educator, leader, spokesperson and professional association, program officials said. Founded in 1848, it serves some 262 affiliated societies and academies of science, serving 10 million individuals.



Photos by Alejandro Echeverry, Ph.D.

## Miller receives chancellor's council distinguished teaching award *by Norman Martin*

Nationally-honored meat judging coach Mark Miller, Texas Tech's San Antonio Livestock Exposition Distinguished Chair in Meat Science, was presented with a 2010 Texas Tech University System Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching Award.

Recipients of the annual honor "exemplify the quality and character of the professors in the Texas Tech University System," said Chancellor Kent Hance. "Their passion and dedication to academics and research is unmatched and is apparent through their hard work and numerous achievements."

Miller, who serves as a professor in Tech's Department of Animal and Food Sciences, received a medallion and a \$5,000 cash award. The Chancellor's Council raises funds for student scholarships and recruitment, faculty awards and support, as well as other programs, officials noted. It's the tenth year for the chancellor's council to present the awards.

In addition to his teaching duties at the university, Miller directs an award-winning meat judging program. This past year the team was undefeated at six of seven national contests, making it one of the most successful teams since meat judging began at Texas Tech in 1938. Meanwhile, Miller led the Meat Science Academic Quiz Bowl Team to back-to-back national championships in 2009 and 2010.

In addition to teaching, Miller conducts a number of research projects related to meat quality, tenderness, body composition and food safety. His awards for grants, scholarships and contracts total more than \$7.1 million.

Prior to joining Texas Tech in 1990, Miller served as a research associate at Texas A&M University and later an assistant professor of meat science at the University of Georgia. Miller received his bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science from Texas Tech. His doctorate in meat science is from Texas A&M.

