Summer is upon us now with its sunny skies, heat and humidity. Many of us will be taking family vacations and spending time with friends. It is a time for barbecues, beaches, and finding ways to stay cool. It is time to relax a bit, with schools out, and a little lull in traffic patterns.

However, for some at the Center, work never slows down. We are working on new project plans and preparing annual reports, some of our most important tasks. We are planning on end of the year spending, and waiting to see if we will have a budget in place on October 1.

It is also Hurricane season, a time for us to get our homes and labs prepared for a possible storm. Hopefully everyone has signed up for the Omnilert system (previously called Amerilert) to get the latest updates on any emergency situation, as well as provided the most recent contact information to your PSA. We will probably soon have a drill for the reporting requirements in case we are shut down for an extended period of time due to weather related emergencies.

Also, we started this summer with a number of visitors to our facility in June. And this trend will continue in July when we will host the Southern Legislative Conference participants on July 16th. About 40 members of the SLC’s Agriculture & Rural Development Committee will visit and tour the Center. We are always ready, at every opportunity, to talk about all our research successes and their contributions to improving the quality of life.

Have a great summer, and be safe.
Events and Observances

Caribbean American Heritage Month Celebration
Submitted by: Mike Watson

The first event of the Caribbean American Heritage Month Celebration was held on June 13. We held our annual “Taste of Caribbean” where staff sampled the delicious aromatic coffee flavors of the Caribbean region. Participants were also treated to a video entitled “History of the Caribbean” where we learned about the European explorers and their impact on the region. The Caribbean’s rich history, including its people, music and art was also presented.

Our second event and main attraction was a fusion of dance and art held on June 20. Our guest artists were Ms. Marissa Joseph and Mr. Ramiro Diaz. Ms. Joseph is a nationally and internationally recognized dance artist that specializes in Afro Creole and Afro Caribbean dance styles. Mr. Diaz is a Cuban born visual artist specializing in artwork, both paintings and sculpted works, adorned with Caribbean influences.

For the viewing pleasure of the participating audience, Ms. Joseph gave an entertaining exhibition of Afro Caribbean/Creole dance styles while Mr. Diaz simultaneously sketched her performance on the paint canvas. The performance was very well received by the audience with 72 staff in attendance. Enhancing this event, Caribbean cuisine was provided by Boswell’s Jamaican Grill, and everyone seemed to enjoy their lunch.
Events and Observances (cont.)

Center Visitors

Southern Legislative Conference  
Submitted by: Deepak Bhatnagar

SRRC will host the Southern Legislative Conference (SLC) on Tuesday, July 16. As part of the 73rd Annual Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference, the SLC’s Agriculture & Rural Development Committee has requested a briefing and tour of the Southern Regional Research Center.

The SLC Annual Meeting is the largest regional gathering of policymakers of its kind. Each year, the Annual Meeting provides state elected and appointed officials with an opportunity to share their experiences with other policymakers addressing similar issues across a broad spectrum. Regional and national policy experts address an array of topics germane to the Conference’s six standing committees, which serve as the foundation for policy discussions.

Please extend our visitors a warm SRRC welcome.

Building Assessment team visits SRRC  
Submitted by: Matt King

The Facilities Division-Capital Investment and Asset Management Branch (CIAMB) is managing a program to perform facility assessments of all ARS owned facilities. ARS has awarded the contract to ALPHA Facilities Solutions to conduct these surveys. Members of this team performed a SRRC facility assessment from June 4th - 14th. The information obtained in the assessments will be provided to us in a facility condition assessment report and the data entered into the Army Corps, BUILDER SMS (Sustainable Management System) program that is used to calculate the Facility Condition Index (FCI) and the Functionality Index (FI) for our facility.

ARS is required by EO 13327 to update and report the FCI annually for every ARS owned building. The FI and FCI will also be used in the future along with program priority to develop the Capital Investment Strategy for modernizing ARS facilities.
Sprouting R&D and capacities in FPSQ

Submitted by: John Beaulieu

Dr. John Beaulieu welcomed three separate groups of visitors to tour the SRRC and discuss collaboration, Tuesday through Thursday June 4-6, 2019. Visitors included Dr. Cecilia Nunes and two graduate students, Alyssa Smith and Haley Inselberg, from the University of Southern Florida; Dr. Alberta Aryee and her graduate student, Ebirim Rosemary from Delaware State University; Dr. Nii-lante Amissah and his graduate student, Crossby Tutu, from the University of Ghana (pictured from right to left). Finally, Kristina Jevtic from SunGarden Seeds, Sprouts, & Ingredients (International Specialty Supply) in Tennessee visited SRRC to better understand the sprouting R&D and capacities in the FPSQ Research Unit. Visits were in association with the Institute of Food Technologists meeting in NOLA where Dr. Beaulieu delivered a poster entitled “Green technologies and a “free-flowing” process for novel sprouted long-grain brown rice beverages”.

Intellectual Property (IP) Seminar

Submitted by: Thomas Klasson

Mr. Malcom Bezet, with the FBI, visited SRRC on Friday, June 21, and gave a presentation on Intellectual Property. Mr. Bezet provided examples on how IP data developed by American research institutions or private companies are stolen and transferred to foreign interest groups. This sometimes happens on a State-sponsored level and, in some countries (e.g., China), incentives are offered to non-traditional intelligence collectors, such as visiting researchers, to steal data while working in the US. According to China’s own reporting, there are 56,000 individuals enrolled in the program. In some cases, foreign nationals have also been found to influence the direction of research project in the US and to work on research that is of interest to the foreign nation. The current China trade conflict with the US was highlighted and discussed, as IP theft is part of the conflict.
Dr. Stephanie Pearl visit
Submitted by: Deepak Bhatnagar

Dr. Stephanie Pearl, Science Communications Advisor, Office of National Programs visited with the Center Director, SYs, postdocs and Research Leaders on June 20. During the meeting with scientists, Dr. Pearl presented on topics: Accomplishment reporting, with a brief overview of the national program cycle, uses of the accomplishment reports, and tips on how to effectively write accomplishment reports; ARS Prestigious Awards Committee; 1890s Faculty Research Sabbatical Program; and ARS Postdoc Network. Following her presentation, Dr. Pearl visited with research units and enjoyed our Caribbean Heritage Celebration.

Dr. Pearl (right) participates with our Caribbean guest demonstration.

Library Information Corner
Submitted by: Suhad Wojkowski

Alert Service
Alerts allow you to keep up-to-date with current information on topics of interest as it becomes available.

The Librarian can create new personalized Search Alerts in DigiTop, PubMed, and textile databases by coordinating search strategies with relevant resources/databases.

Examples of Alerts:

- **Search:** Search the database with a refined strategy to return the citations that meet your information needs.
- **Author Citation:** Identify the author you wish to follow.
- **Document Citation:**
  - Be informed when a specific document is cited in Scopus.
  - Be notified of new articles in your favorite journal.

Alerts can be delivered on a frequency of your choosing:
- Every day
- Every week -- Choose day of the week
- Every month -- Choose day of the month

If you are interested in setting up an Alert, please contact Suhad in the Library, ext. 288.
Submitted by: Shannon Beltz

**Coming soon from the Safety Office:**

- Chemical Hygiene/GHS Training in July
- Building-wide update of our barcoded chemical inventory (one Unit at a time)

**Get to Know Your Safety Committee**

**Featured Committee Member:** Michael Easson, Chemical Hygiene Officer  
**College & Degree(s):** University of New Orleans (B.S. Chemistry), Louisiana State University (B.A. Political Science, M.S. Chemistry, Ph.D. Chemistry)  
**Years at USDA:** 2008-Present  

Dr. Easson is a Research Chemist in the Cotton Chemistry and Utilization Research Unit. He works on developing new chemistries to improve fire retardant finishes on cotton for mattresses and children's sleepwear, development of biomedical textiles, including bandages to be used for the treatment of chronic wounds, antibacterial textiles to prevent disease transmission and cotton-based decontamination fabrics for chemical and biological warfare agents and food safety. He also works on green technologies to address climate change issues via supercritical CO2 and enzyme treatments which will reduce wastes and energy consumption for cotton processing.

**Michael answers some questions:**

**What’s your favorite type of molecule in chemistry?** Esters like peppermint and spearmint.

**Why chemistry? Isn’t Biology better?** Chemistry explores the mind of God at work in the Universe at the molecular, atomic and sub-atomic levels.

**What’s your favorite thing about working at SRRC?** I have creative freedom to pursue research interests related to cotton-based materials.

**What’s your favorite Star Wars movie and why?** Spaceballs…Mel Brooks, of course. Your go-to snowball flavor: Cherry with cream

**If you had to choose between king cake or beignets** … King cake, because you must have coffee with beignets.

**Your favorite po-boy?** Domilise’s

**Mardi Gras, Jazz Fest, or a Saints Game?** Saint’s game with a crowd of fans.

**Spring, Summer, Fall, or Winter?** Fall…a welcome break from the Summer heat and the approaching holiday season.

**What’s playing in your car music-wise when you drive to work?** An assortment of many types of music, depending on my mood.

**If you were flying out of MSY tomorrow, where would you go?** Domestic: NYC, International: Paris
Cotton Fiber Bioscience Research Unit at Work

Submitted by: David Fang

Employees from the Cotton Fiber Bioscience Research Unit are working in the cotton field on SRRC campus. The CFB scientists grow cotton plants in this field for multiple projects including confirming genetic locus of a short fiber mutation (PI: Fang), mapping a genetic locus for fiber maturity (PI: Kim), and large scale of eQTL analysis using a MAGIC population (PI: Naoumkina).

Chris Florane is checking the experimental cotton plants for any abnormal morphology.

Ping Li is pulling weeds in SRRC cotton field.
Scientific Presentations and Meetings

Institute of Food Technologists Annual Event and Food Expo

Submitted by: Casey Grimm

The annual meeting and food expo of Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) was held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans on June 2-5, 2019. With over 17,000 attendees, the event is one of the largest of its kind, bringing together science of food professionals from around the globe, representing all segments of the science of food profession—research and design, ingredients, safety and quality, technology, equipment, processing, packaging, manufacturing, suppliers and buyers, policy makers, and academics.

This year’s theme was Feed your Future, with special programs like Food and Nutrition Security and Gut Microbiome. Scientist and well known author, Temple Grandin was the plenary speak. She is one of the most accomplished and well-known adults with autism in the world and was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2016.

The Food Expo is like no other found at scientific meetings. Food samples provided by the ingredients companies are available everywhere featuring some rather strange offerings, including vegetable meat-like products, fat free foods, and flavored vodkas. Whether you’re vegan, vegetarian or flexitarian, more and more consumers are gravitating to plant based eating providing an opportunity for totally plant based formulations. Other symposia extolled the development of co-products from waste streams and the recapturing of nutrients from unused food. Be careful of what you are eating!

Support scientists and technicians in FPSQ were encouraged to take advantage of the meeting since it was being held in New Orleans and actively participate. This was facilitated by providing complimentary registration for those who volunteered at the hospitality desk, which served to provide our out of town guests with meeting and local information. This saved the center over $6000 in registration fees. For the first time a Hospitality desk was located at a Meeting Hotel (Marriott) and at the Convention Center. The desks were manned by SRRC and LSU volunteers. Technical trips were set up to take attendees to the local companies, Aunt Sallies Pralines and NOLA Brewery. In addition to serving as local hosts, FPSQ researchers presented 3 posters at the scientific sessions.

Presentations:

- Determination of Human Sensory Threshold For The Off-Flavors Commonly Found In Farm Raised Catfish. Jeanne M. Lea and Casey C. Grimm


Human Resources Corner

Submitted by: Janell Becker

New Employees

Please welcome seven new employees to SRRC:

Jonathan Carias is working as a Physical Science Technician in the Food Processing and Sensory Quality Research Unit with Dr. Casey Grimm. Jonathan attends Brother Martin High School and is an active member of NJROTC.

Earl Dawson is a Student Intern working with Dr. Isabel Lima in the Commodity Utilization Research Unit. Earl attends Delgado Community College and will be graduating after the fall semester with an AAS in Science Lab Tech.
Human Resources Corner (cont.)

New Employees (cont.)

Madison Dupre is working with Dr. Soheila Maleki as a Biological Science Aid in the Food Processing and Sensory Quality Research Unit. Madison will be a senior this fall at Riverdale High School.

Kennedi Franklin is working as a Biological Science Aid in the Food Processing and Sensory Quality Research Unit with Dr. Stephen Boue. Kennedi is a student at Warren Easton Charter High School.

Ron Franklin is working in the Cotton Structure and Quality Research Unit with Christopher Delhom as a Physical Science Technician. Ron graduated from Archbishop Rummel High School in May, and will be attending Bossier Parish Community College in the fall.

Rachel Oxley is a Student Intern working in the Food Processing and Sensory Quality Research Unit with Dr. Barry Hurlburt. Rachel will graduate in December from Delgado Community College.

Isabella Sullivan is working as a Biological Science Aid in the Cotton Fiber Bioscience Research Unit with Dr. David Fang. Isabella is currently working on a Bachelor of Science Degree at Saint Louis University.

Death of Former Employee

Julie Gail Peters passed away on Sunday, June 2, 2019. Julie was a resident of Brookhaven, Mississippi at the time of passing. Funeral services for Julie Gail Peters of Brookhaven, MS were held on Saturday, June 8, 2019 at Bethel AME Church, Brookhaven, MS.
The **Plastic Free EcoChallenge** would like you to join
**Reduce Reuse Recycle NOLA!**

Inspired by the Australian-founded initiative, the Plastic Free EcoChallenge is a 31-day, global challenge to reduce and refuse single-use plastics. Take action on creating plastic-free habits with us!

The challenge runs from Monday, July 01 to Wednesday, July 31 and is a chance for a lot of people around the world to simultaneously try their hardest and create an immense amount of positive impact on our environment. Trade-off? We establish new and improved habits that support a plastic-free world.

**Will you Rise to the Challenge? It's just a few steps to register and get started.**

Please join the Plastic Free EcoChallenge participants to prove that everyday actions can make a big impact!

For more information, see ECOCHALLENGE website: [https://ecochallenge.org/](https://ecochallenge.org/)

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**New Orleans and Louisiana Area Events**

**Submitted by: Terri Von Hoven**

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<td>New Orleans</td>
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<td>Running of the Bulls</td>
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<td>Tales of the Cocktail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art of the City Book Club—Unfathomable City</td>
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<td>Cajun Music and Food Festival</td>
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<td>International Grand Isle Tarpon Rodeo</td>
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**PEDAL features SRRC**

The Summer 2019 issue of **PEDAL** (Promoting Engagement and Diversity at Area Locations), the SEA biannual newsletter by the Southeast Area Council for Employee Engagement, Diversity, Inclusion and Outreach (SEACEEDIO) featured numerous stories about SRRC, including a ‘Location Spotlight’.

The newsletter concludes with an article by our Center Director, Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar where he reflects on an integrated research approach using collaboration to share resources and expertise to solve agricultural problems. Collaboration requires that we reach out and engage others to achieve success. Integrating inclusion and acknowledging diversity into our practices improves our work.

See a copy of the Summer issue in Archie Tucker’s email sent on June 28; a copy will soon be available on Axon: [https://axon.ars.usda.gov/pages/Intranet%20Home.aspx](https://axon.ars.usda.gov/pages/Intranet%20Home.aspx)
Recent SRRC Publications

Submitted by: Suhad Wojkowski


