

## **Report for the Conference on Hot Topics on Peanuts**

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And

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This conference took place on September 4, 2007 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Charter House Hotel, Bainbridge, Georgia. About 80 people attended the conference. Eight speakers were invited and each gave a 15 to 25 min talk.

The first speaker was Dr. Stanley Fletcher from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department, University of Georgia (UGA). He gave an update on the 2007 farm bill. The second speaker was Dr. John Beasley from the Crop and Soil Sciences Department, UGA on projected 2007 Georgia peanut crop. Dr. Soheila Maleki, a research scientist from the USDA-ARS Southern Regional Center, was the third speaker. Her talk was on “Allergenicity of peanuts/peanut products.” Dr. Jonathan H. Williams from UGA was the next speaker. He is the Director of the USAID Peanut CRSP program and he gave an overview of this new 5-year research program on peanuts. Dr. Arthur Liang from CDC then gave a talk on the 2007 peanut butter outbreak investigations. Dr. Erdal Tuncan from ConAgra Foods then gave a presentation on their approach to ensure food safety particularly their past experience on peanut butter and how to ensure peanut butter safety in the future. Dr. Dick Phillips from the Food Science and Technology Department, UGA-Griffin then gave a talk on his experiences on developing peanut-based products. Dr. Yen-Con Hung also from the Food Science and Technology Department, UGA-Griffin was the last speaker. He gave an update on his Southeastern Peanut Research Initiative funded project on peanut pasta.

Immediately after the conference, peanut pasta developed by Dr. Yen-Con Hung’s research group was distributed for a take home use test. Thirteen people returned their evaluations and 8 of them indicated that they “like moderately” (7 on the 9-point hedonic scale) of the peanut pasta. Five people prefer peanut pasta while 6 people prefer whole wheat pasta. Ten out of 13 people think the degree of peanut flavor in the peanut pasta was about right. Seven out of 13 people think cooked peanut pasta texture is perfect and 9 out of 13 people indicated that dried pasta remained intact until cooking. Many people commented that they would purchase peanut pasta solely based on the high nutritional quality and unique peanut taste.