

Final report for the 2015 Conference on Hot Topics on Peanuts

Yen-Con Hung

Food Product Innovation and Commercialization Center, Department of Food Sci. and Tech.
University of Georgia

This conference took place on September 15th, 2015 from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Best Western Rose City Conf. Center Inn at Thomasville, GA. About 90 people attended the conference. A total of 5 talks were presented. The focus of the 2015 Hot Topics was on “Peanut processing and utilization.”

The first speaker was Dr. Scott Monfort and he gave an update on the 2015 Georgia peanut acreage and acreage in other peanut producing States. US peanut planted acreage is reported at up 18% to 1.6 million in 2015. Georgia is up 33% and the Southeast up 25%. He projected the 2015 peanut production to be at 3.1 million Tons.

For the special focus session, Dr. Kirk Kealey, Director of the Food Product Innovation and Commercialization Center (FoodPIC) gave an overview of their program. The purpose of FoodPIC is to assist companies in developing new food products efficiently and economically. FoodPIC facilitates commercialization of food products by providing intellectual resources and physical facilities for both start-up ventures and existing food companies. In addition, a new food business incubator building is currently under construction and companies will be able to use this facility to produce/process test products. The center is also offering a training workshop on “Starting a new food business” to cover topics ranging from regulations and food safety guidelines; market analysis; to business planning and production. Dr. Koushik Adhikari then presented his research findings on “Flavor of roasted peanuts.” Runner type of peanuts account for 80 percent of the peanuts grown in the United States and they also have good flavor and roasting characteristics. Methyl pyrazine is the main aromatic compound associated with medium-roast peanuts and hydroperoxides is the primary non-volatile oxidation product produced during oxidation process. High-oleic 13M was significantly preferred over normal-oleic 06G for both consumer overall liking and roasted peanut flavor liking scores at all three storage time periods. High-oleic 13M also had more pyrazines as compared to normal-oleic 06G. Dr. Yen-Con Hung gave the next presentation on “Peanut flour and oil.” Peanut flours are low fat, high protein functional ingredients prepared from partially defatted, roasted peanut kernels. He gave an overview on instant mix they developed using peanut flour for making peanut pasta, peanut drink, peanut pancake, and peanut ice cream. Similar commercial products like Bell Plantation’s “Powdered peanut butter” and Peanut Hottie’s “Instant hot beverage” are now available on the market. He also presented that peanut oil has high smoke point and low oil absorption drying frying and hence make it good deep-frying oil. Dr. Dick Phillips was the last speaker for the special focus session and his presentation was on “Fate of probiotics in peanut butter.” He mentioned the current ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTF) are designed for children and most RUTFs are like a peanut butter, which can be hard to swallow. He presented their USAID funded research on creating a low-cost, drinkable peanut-based RUTF designed specifically for pregnant women in Mali. He also presented research on adding probiotics into peanut butter. He found, probiotics were able to maintain high survivability was due to peanut butter protected probiotics during simulated gastrointestinal passage.