The following news items illustrate some of our activities during the first quarter of 2015 (January – April 2015). To keep up to date with our activities, please take a look at our news pages at:

http://www.reading.ac.uk/foodbiosciences/about/foodbio-news.asp

Follow us on www.facebook.com/FoodatReading

Giant colon from the Great British Bioscience Festival

The giant colon that was made for the Great British Bioscience Festival is now housed at the Winchester Science Centre. After the festival, the team have continued to build on the design- but it is now complete, open for business and has been test-run on many school children already.

The team have been watching users carefully over the last month or so, making adjustments based on their observations. This week, Prof Parveen Yaqoob, Dr Ben Littlefield, Dr Gemma Walton went to see it in action and made some final suggestions for improvement, which will be made very soon. There will be a launch event in the next few months.
Giant colon at the Winchester Science Centre

RESEARCHER HIGHLIGHTS

Dr Carol Wagstaff attended the Eucarpia Leafy Vegetables Congress in Murcia, Spain (14th - 17th April 2015) and gave a talk on the lettuce and rocket research. Carol was the chair and organiser of the congress which hosted over 100 delegates from around the world. Over 50% of attendees were from industry, mainly the breeders of leafy veg crops, but also with representation from the growers. A special industry-led session was designed to promote communication between industries working at different places along the supply chain and Primaflor (the largest salad grower and third largest processor in Spain) hosted a technical visit. She gave prizes for the best poster and talk by an early-career researcher. Carol is now the Chair of the Eucarpia Leafy Vegetables Section for the next four years.

Dr Anne McCartney was an invited speaker at The New York Academy of Sciences conference Nutrition and the Science of Disease Prevention: A Systems Approach to Support Metabolic Health, held in New York on 16th April 2015. The one-day meeting involved a multi-disciplinary program covering multiple factors that affect metabolism and how systems-thinking provides a framework for disease prevention. Dr McCartney presented recent work from her research group/collaborations investigating gut microbiota niches and their relevance to metabolic health. The Keynote address Systems epidemiology approach to understanding nutrition and obesity and diabetes was presented by Professor Frank Hu. Other topics presented at the conference included Molecular physiology of the control of body weight; Systems genetic approaches to gene/diet interactions; Nutrition and the science of disease prevention; Mathematical modeling of human energy metabolism and body weight dynamics; and Using behavioural science to inform the design of food policies. The meeting was well attended and elicited healthy inter-disciplinary discussions both during panel Q&A sessions and during coffee/lunch breaks.
Professor Parveen Yaqoob has been appointed Head of the School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy, University of Reading, for the period 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2019.

Professor Parveen Yaqoob has also been awarded Fellow of the Association for Nutrition (FAIN). This is awarded to those who demonstrate high standards of professional leadership in nutrition.

Professor Julie Lovegrove was invited to present at the Experimental Biology Conference, which took place in Boston USA from 27th March to 1st April 2015. Experimental Biology is an annual meeting comprised of over 20,000 scientists and exhibitors representing six sponsoring societies and multiple guest societies. General fields of study include anatomy, physiology, pathology, biochemistry, nutrition, and pharmacology. Julie presented to a jam-packed room on ‘Diet, the gut microbiome and cardio-metabolic risk’, which was very well received.

Dr. Ditte Hobbs also attended this conference and was awarded the Society of Chemical Industry (SCI) AJ Bank Travel Bursary to attend. She gave a poster presentation on ‘Identification of dietary patterns associated with dairy consumption in British children’.
Dr. Ditte Hobbs giving her poster presentation

Dr. Virag Sagi-Kiss and Dr. Gunter Kuhnle also gave poster presentations on ‘endogenous formation of nitroso compounds in stimulated gastric conditions’ and ‘association between fructose, uric acid and blood pressure’, respectively. All three posters were well received.

They also found a bit of time to explore the city of Boston and sampled some of the local delicacies:

Virag and Anestis sample the local delicacies

At the Top of the Hub

Visiting Harvard University

Professor Julie Lovegrove was invited to give a talk at the following conferences:

March 2015  Saturated Fat, Dairy and Cardiovascular Disease: A Fresh Look at the Evidence. ‘Dairy and cardio-metabolic risk’. Glasgow, Scotland

Jan 2015  New Frontiers in Fibre. –British Nutrition Foundation. ‘Fibre and cardiovascular disease: Is the way to a man’s heart through his gut microbiota’ London UK
**Dr Vimal Karani** was invited to deliver a lecture on ‘Nutrigenetics and Obesity-related traits’ at the ‘Food, Nutrition and Agriculture Genomics Congress’ (April 29th – 30th 2015) in London. Over 200 delegates working in Food, Nutrition and Agriculture Genomics attended the meeting.

The key focus of this meeting was on the use of innovative and essential technologies like Next Generation Sequencing technologies, genomic technologies, Digital PRC and advances in qPCR in addressing and overcoming current challenges in Food, Plant and Agriculture Research.


**Dr Vimal Karani** won the Best Presentation Award for his Nutrigenetics work at the British Council funded workshop on “Nutrition Policy to Practice in Pakistan: Exploring the Challenges and Research Opportunities” at Islamabad, Pakistan (March 8th – 11th 2015). The workshop focussed on outlining the current situation regarding nutrition policy in Pakistan, and how policy could, in the ideal world, be brought into practice. It also discussed the possible role of the different sectors in contributing to achieving policy goals and determining how Pakistan compares to the SUN and first 1000 days initiatives.
Dr Vimal Karani was invited to present at the British Council funded workshop on ‘Mechanisms underlying developmental programming of metabolic diseases – insight into prevention strategies’ at São Paulo, Brazil. He was also a chair for the session on Nutrigenetics.

The British Council and FAPESP have launched a new five-year programme to encourage international research collaboration between ambitious young researchers from the UK and eighteen countries around the world. The programme, now co-funded under Newton Fund, the British Council and FAPESP, “Researcher Links” provides opportunities for early career researchers from the UK and internationally to interact, learn from each other and explore opportunities for building long-lasting research collaborations.

Dr Vimal Karani chairing the session

Dr Vimal Karani giving the talk

Dr Vimal Karani chairing the session

Dr Vimal Karani giving the talk

Dr Vimal Karani won the RETF runner-up prize (£250) for his research publication on ‘Genetic research clarifies link between hypertension and Vitamin D deficiency’ which was published last year in the Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology. The following abstract was selected for the RETF prize.

‘Although observational studies have shown that low vitamin D levels are likely to be associated with increases in hypertension, it is still unclear whether the association is causal. This causal relationship was explored using the data from D-CarDia collaboration (N= 146,000). Genetic variants were used as proxies to reflect the vitamin D status to test for a causal association with hypertension. When the results were analysed, we found that for every 10% increase in vitamin D levels, there was an 8.1% decrease in the risk of developing hypertension. Low vitamin D status is common throughout the western world and hence these data have important public health implications from the British perspective, given the high prevalence of vitamin D deficiency. Our genetic study strongly suggests that some cases of cardiovascular disease could be prevented through vitamin D supplements or food fortifications providing further support for important non-skeletal effects of vitamin D.

This article has been published in Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology, which has a high impact factor and the quality of this research work is world-leading in terms of originality and significance (REF 4*)


Dr Vimal Karani was invited to present at the British Council funded workshop on ‘Mechanisms underlying developmental programming of metabolic diseases – insight into prevention strategies’ at São Paulo, Brazil. He was also a chair for the session on Nutrigenetics.
Dr Vimal Karani has been invited to join the Editorial Board as a Guest Editor for a special issue on ‘B Vitamins Deficiencies in the Etiology Oxidative Stress-Mediated Noncommunicable Diseases’ in the journal ‘Oxidative Medicine and Cellular Longevity’.

The general goal for this special issue is the primary prevention of hyperhomocysteinemia-mediated oxidative stress among high risk groups. The specific aims are to tackle (1) the metabolic modulation of hyperhomocysteinemia-mediated oxidative stress by B vitamins, (2) early diagnosis and screening of hyperhomocysteinemia by measuring novel biomarkers and (3) the epigenetic effects of hyperhomocysteinemia by assaying the single nucleotide polymorphisms, SNPs, and DNA methylation.

This special issue will be a collection of articles (research articles, case reports, hypotheses, and review articles) based on the following themes. Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Nutritional deficiencies of B vitamins (folate and B6 and B12 vitamins)
- Oxidative stress as an etiological factor for noncommunicable diseases during early childhood and adulthood stages of life
- Homeostasis of homocysteine-dependent methylation and transsulfuration reactions
- B vitamins as an epigenetic determinant for DNA hypomethylation

Authors can submit their manuscripts via the Manuscript Tracking System at http://mts.hindawi.com/submit/journals/omcl/bvh/.

Manuscript Due Friday, 4 September 2015
First Round of Reviews Friday, 27 November 2015
Publication Date Friday, 22 January 2016

Dr Marie Lewis has been invited to join the Editorial Board of Nutritional Immunology (specialty section of Frontiers in Nutrition and Frontiers in Immunology).
http://www.frontiersin.org/Nutritional_Immunology/editorialboard

Dr Marie Lewis was invited to give a talk on her research work at the ASE (Association for Science Education) Annual Conference 2015 (7-10 January 2015) at the University of Reading. ASE has members who are science teachers in several thousand UK schools – and with several hundred international members also. Their annual conference attracts around 3 thousand members each year and they tend to alternate between the North and South of England. The University of Reading has been successful in attracting ASE back here every 2-3 years for the last 15 years or so. The University of Reading provide mutual support to ASE in this undertaking – including the free use of our lecture theatre facilities – as this high profile event places the university at the heart of UK (and beyond) science teaching: the participants are those who teach our prospective students in the Faculties of Science and of Life Sciences!

The ASE annual conference has multiple concurrent sessions (see http://www.ase.org.uk/news/ase-news/ase-annual-conference-2014-delegate-handbook-now-online/ where you can download the current brochure at the current time).
Flowcytometry analyses the physical and chemical characteristics of cells or particles by streaming them past a laser and detecting their unique refraction index. It is especially useful for counting different types of cells (eukaryotic or prokaryotic) within a mixed population and can count thousands of units per second.

The BD Accuri C6 is a four-colour, dual laser flow cytometer which allows simultaneous multiparametric analysis.

This equipment is capable of analysis in many areas including:

1. **Microbiology** - eg. Gut microbiota analysis by FlowFISH.
2. **Quantification of different cell phenotypes** – by cell surface markers, intracellular cytokine or transcription factor expression.
3. **Apoptosis** – eg. Quantification of JC-1 and Caspase-3 producing cell.
4. **Cell activation** – eg. Naïve/activated T Cells
5. **Cell proliferation and differentiation in culture in response to intervention** - such as drug therapy.

Pre-optimised reagent **kits and templates** are available for many different assays and technical support is provided by Angelika Bacsy.

We are currently offering free training. Anyone interested in using the facility, or wishing to discuss potential projects should contact: **Dr Marie Lewis** at marie.lewis@reading.ac.uk, ext 8708), **Dr Gemma Walton** g.e.walton@reading.ac.uk or **Dr Adele Costabile** afs04ac@reading.ac.uk.
Dr Mike Lewis has been busy in 2015. In February he visited San Luis Obispo in California. He gave two seminars to students at Cal Poly and two papers at the US 17th Annual Dairy Ingredients Symposium. These were on UHT processing: challenges and opportunities and stability issues in UHT milk and related products. Shortly afterwards he visited Australia, where he participated in a one-day workshop on Raw milk quality and a two-day workshop on UHT processing, both organized by Dairy Innovation Australia Ltd (DIAL). Almost 100 delegates attended these two workshops. He also did a WEBINAR on heat stability of milk for the National centre for dairy Education, Australia. In March he attended the IDF meeting on non-bovine milk, organized by the IDF in Cyprus and presented a paper on heat stability of goat milk. The local programme coordinator was Photis Papademis, who did his BSc at Reading in Chemistry and Food Science (1997) and also his PhD with Richard Robinson (2000). Photis did his undergraduate research project with Mike. In April Mike conducted a two-day workshop on UHT milk at University College Cork, and 36 people from more than 15 different organisations attended. He also conducted a workshop on thermal processing of milk in Reading and one specifically for a UK Dairy Company. In January and February he also helped with UHT pilot plant trials for customers of FPC at the University. Mike is still preparing papers for publication and writing a book on UHT processing with Hilton Deeth from Australia.

Heart Health: A Beginner’s Guide to Cardiovascular Disease

The University of Reading’s free online course to introduce the structure and function of the cardiovascular system and some of the conditions that can affect it. Short videos, weekly practical exercises, online discussion activities and weekly quizzes are used to introduce cardiovascular disease to the general public.

Begins Monday 11th May – 3 hours / week for 4 weeks

Find out more and enrol at: https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/heart-health/
DEPARTMENTAL SUCCESS IN OBTAINING RESEARCH GRANTS

Dr Carol Wagstaff has been awarded a two year KTP grant with MM flowers. She will be starting the projects on lettuce quality (totalling £5M over 3 years) in June/July and also have just recruited a new postdoctoral associate for a KTP grant with MM Flowers who is Jayne Davis. Jayne joins the team in May from James Hutton Institute and will be based at MM Flowers in Chatteris where she will be developing ways to improve the vase life of roses.

Prof Jon Gibbins (PI), Prof Julie Lovegrove (Co-PI) and Dr Vimal Karani (Co-PI) have been awarded £1,426,158 for the work on “The physiological importance and integration of receptor-mediated inhibitory mechanisms in platelets in health and disease (renewal)” by British Heart Foundation (BHF). This work will start from 1st September 2015.

Dr Vimal Karani has been awarded funds for Undergraduate Research Opportunity Programme (UROP) Placement for summer 2015.

Dr Vimal Karani has been awarded funds initiate a UK-Pakistan collaboration on ‘Nutrigenetics and metabolic traits’ by the British council – Higher Education Commission for Pakistan.

Dr Vimal Karani has been awarded funds to initiate a UK-Brazil collaboration on ‘Use of Nutrigenetics and Epigenetics technologies to prevent metabolic diseases’ by the British council-FAPESP.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Anyone interested in regular updates on funding opportunities can subscribe to the Food and Nutrition Magazine, a compilation of relevant funding opportunities from ResearchProfessional.com. This email listing comes out at the end of every month. To subscribe, email RES@reading.ac.uk with your name, email and the name of your department.

You can also search the funding databased at ResearchProfessional.com on your own at any time. Please see this link for more details: http://www.reading.ac.uk/closed/res/ResearchSupportClosed/FindingFunding/reas-redFindingfunding.aspx. You can tailor funding alerts based on your particular research areas.

If you would like help applying to any of these grants or help searching for opportunities for your particular research project, please contact your Research and Enterprise Manager, Kirsty Smith at kirsty.smith@reading.ac.uk.

Upcoming funding opportunities

BBSRC/MRC joint research highlight on Mechanistic Research in Nutrition.

The highlight invites researchers from a range of backgrounds to apply their expertise to understand how diet and nutritional components act at a molecular, cellular and systems level to influence physiological and pathological processes. It follows publication of the Cross-Council vision for Food, Nutrition and Health Research and BBSRC’s Strategic Framework for Research in Food, Nutrition and Health, and welcomes cross-Council proposals.

Please see the BBSRC and MRC websites for more information on highlight scope and application details. Please note that funding for the highlight is not ring-fenced; successful applications will be funded through BBSRC Responsive Mode (15RM3) or MRC’s normal deadlines and funding schemes. However, strategic relevance to the highlight will be one of the criteria considered during the review process.

Please also feel free to get in touch directly – applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their project proposal with BBSRC or MRC offices.
BBSRC Diet and Health Industry Club (DRINC) call is now open: deadline for outline applications 1st July 2015 – see http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/collaborative-research/industry-clubs/drinc/apply/ for further details

MRC CASE studentships: The deadline for applications is Wednesday 8th July at 4pm. **The internal deadline for applications will be Wednesday 1st July.** Applications must be submitted via JeS. The call details can be found here: http://www.mrc.ac.uk/skills-careers/studentships/how-we-fund-studentships/industrial-case-studentships/ where you will also find a copy of the application form and the company form which will need to be completed by your Industrial partner.

**Rank Prize Fund Nutrition Committee New Lecturer Awards.** Deadline for applications 28th August 2015 – further details can be found here: http://www.rankprize.org/index.php/news/new-investigator-awards

**Rank Prize Fund Post-graduate studentship 2016** – deadline for applications 10th November 2015. Further details can be found here: http://www.rankprize.org/index.php/news - see bottom of the page.

You are all reminded that any research grant applications must be submitted via your Research and Enterprise Development Manager, Kirsty Smith (Kirsty.Smith@reading.ac.uk)

The University subscribes to Research Professional which enables you to set up your own searches or subscribe to the Research Funding magazines. Go to https://www.researchprofessional.com/0/rr/home to set up your own account.

**Change of name for Doctoral Training Grants (DTG)**

As you are aware the Research Councils are working towards being more harmonised, it has therefore been decided to re-name all future DTAs and DTGs to Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTP) and to reflect this change in terminology on our website (please see below) with immediate effect. There is no change to the process or the remit of the DTPs. (http://www.reading.ac.uk/graduateschool/dtcsandgrants/gs-dtcs.aspx)

**TRAVEL FUNDS FOR STUDENTS**

All the information regarding travel funds for students can be found at: (http://www.reading.ac.uk/life/life-travel-fund.aspx)

**STAFF TRAINING MOBILITY (STT)**

Erasmus+ programme is not just for students – one of its core components is to encourage more staff mobility within Europe, and in future years to targeted countries across the world (to be integrated into the programme) in order to MODERNISE etc. In essence Erasmus+ provides funds to help Staff mobility to occur, and a framework to enable it to happen. Thereafter it is up to you how take advantage of and benefit from the opportunities available.

Full details of the programme are available on the ESAO website (http://www.reading.ac.uk/studyabroad/staff/vso-internalstaff.aspx ), however colleagues are welcome to make direct enquiries regarding possibilities either via studyabroad@reading.ac.uk or m.a.dowse@reading.ac.uk.
PhD STUDENT NEWS

Research visit to New Zealand - Kunjana Rotjanapun

AgResearch is a scientific research and development company owned by the government. AgResearch is in cooperation with different stakeholders support through research and development to allow for new knowledge and technology to be transferred and used which in turn help driving New Zealand economy forward.

Report on a research visit from October 3, 2014 – March 2, 2015 at AgResearch, Palmerston North, New Zealand

“The aim of research at AgResearch was to investigate the change in mRNA expression in tunicamycin-induced endoplasmic reticulum (ER) stress in the present or absence of selenium in CaCo-2 human colon cancer cells. Under stress, a common circumstance in tumour environment, unfolded protein response (UPS) is activated and induces signalling in cell survival or apoptotic pathways depending on duration and severity of ER stress. In our work, we studied the involvement of selenium on gene expression influencing cell signalling in apoptotic and cell survival pathways induced by ER stress and this could be an option for cancer therapy. The results from this experiment will be included in my PhD thesis.

Kunjana Rotjanapun

My project was carried out under the supervision of Dr. Mark McCann, a senior scientist from AgResearch at Grassland campus. I was introduced to new skills and knowledge for molecular analysis by using qPCR and analysing data obtained. Working with the AgResearch team was enjoyable and valuable, not only in an educational way but also in terms of getting an insight in laws and regulations that is highly important in a research world.

I would like to thank Prof. Ian Rowland for his guidance and Dr. Mark McCann for being a devoted and helpful supervisor, as well as AgResearch for funding this project. Finally, I would like to thank Graduate school, Nutrifield and University of Reading travel awards for partial funding of my travel expenses to New Zealand.”

Luke Bell attended the Eucarpia Leafy Vegetables Congress in Murcia, Spain to give talk on his lettuce and rocket research.

(http://www.verticesur.es/congresos/EUCARPIA2015/)

He was accompanied by Nadia Yahya who presented a poster and assisted with the administration of the event.
Samantha Stone and Yue Li presented posters at the ‘Food, Nutrition and Agriculture Genomics Congress’ (April 29th – 30th 2015) in London. Over 200 delegates working in Food, Nutrition and Agriculture Genomics attended the meeting.

Samantha Stone and Yue Li during their poster presentations

Yue Li, Dr Vimal Karani’s PhD student, received £100 from Daragh Coogan from Future Finance (https://www.financemyfuture.co.uk/) to carry out her project on ‘Nutrigenetics and Type 2 diabetes’.

Dr Karani said ‘The scholarship provided by Future Finance was a timely help. I thank Future Finance for giving this award to my student’.

Yue Li receiving £100 from Daragh Coogan

Rashed Alarfaj attended the British council funded workshop on “Latest technologies for crop improvement” in Turkey.

His poster titled “Phenotyping of fruit quality traits in octoploid strawberry (Fragaria x ananassa)” was chosen among the Best Five Posters awards (representing UoR) against tough competition from University of Warwick, ICL, Greenwich, Worcester, and several Universities and research centres in Turkey.

Rashed Alarfaj and Prof Mahmut Tör
Chelsea Snell has started her 3 months 'campaigns internship' in London. She said 'I'm excited to explore a different aspect of science and I hope to gain some skills in media and policy. I will be supporting the 'Ask for Evidence' campaign in which members of the public can ask companies, the media and politicians for evidence when they have seen a particular claim that relates to all aspects of science, the environment and crime. I will also be involved with the Plant Science as well as the Energy Panel which are groups of scientists in those areas on hand to answer questions from the public regarding topics such as GM and fracking. Sense About Science often hold live Q&A sessions on Twitter where people can tweet questions to scientists for quick answers. We are holding one on the 12th May dedicated to fracking. As for how I got the placement, I have known about the charity for a few years and asked them about doing a placement when I attended a science and media workshop run by them back in September.'

http://www.senseaboutscience.org/

Twitter: @senseaboutsci

Congratulations to Rosalind Fallaize who will be taking on a part-time lectureship in Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Hertfordshire from 1st April, and will continue part-time at the University of Reading until June. She will shortly submit her PhD thesis.

Mark Hobden, supervised by Dr Orla Kennedy, Professor Glenn Gibson and Professor Ian Rowland, has been nominated as the School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy's candidate for PhD Researcher of the Year (2015).

This is a great achievement. Mark's case will now go forward to the Faculty nominations.

The EU-funded interdisciplinary multicentre Food4me project reached its conclusion on 31st March 2015. Prof Julie Lovegrove, Dr Anna Macready and Rosalind Fallaize attended the final Food4Me plenary meeting in Brussels on 25th February 2015, where all present were congratulated on a successful, high-impact project.

Dr Anna Macready and Rosalind Fallaize attended the Food4Me Conference at the Stanhope Hotel, Brussels, on the 26th February 2015, where preliminary results of the project were presented. The headline intervention study results showed that personalised nutrition based on self-reported dietary intake was effective in improving dietary behaviour, however there was no additional benefit shown at this stage for personalised feedback based on phenotype and/or genotype. Analyses are currently ongoing and full results for the main study are expected to be published shortly.
Dr Anna Macready was asked to present her poster on Food4Me design, previously presented at NuGO in 2012 at Helsinki: Macready AL, Fallaize R, Walsh M, Brennan L, Gibney ER, Daniel H, Manios Y, Drevon CA, Traczyk I, Martinez JA, Saris WHM, Mathers JC, Lovegrove JA & Gibney MJ on behalf of the Food4Me project (2012) The Food4Me Project's personalised nutrition internet-based intervention study design. NuGOWeek 2012: Nutrition, lifestyle and genes in the changing environment, 28-31 August, Helsinki, Finland (poster).

Adel Omar gave an oral presentation on the ‘Application of Capillary electrophoresis to the characterisation of major camel milk proteins’ at the The IDF 7th International Symposium on Sheep, Goat and other non-Cow Milk (http://www.idfsheepandgoat.org/), that took place in Limassol, Cyprus 23-25 March 2015. The Symposium provided a renewed vision of knowledge on husbandry and milk production, technology, chemistry, physics, microbiology and nutrition and highlighted the significance of markets and appropriate policies as they have evolved since 2011.

This conference is addressed to scientists and other professionals involved in the sheep's, goat's and other non-cow's dairy sectors including milk producers, dairy processing industry, trade associations, academia, research institutes, and governments.
Yue Li won the runner up prize at the Science slam competition. Reading Science Slam is a thrilling competition in which scientists present their mind-boggling work in a comprehensible and accessible way in just eight minutes. At the end of the evening the audience votes on the best performance. There were prizes for the winners.

This year’s Science slam competition took place at the South Street Arts Centre, Reading.

Yue Li presented her research work in a simple way on the topic ‘Mum and Dad in Love’.

Yue Li doing her presentation at the Science slam competition

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**PhD Vivas**

The following students successfully defended their PhD theses and we pass our congratulations to all of them:

**Iffah Mohd Nawi**, “The role of ARR22 gene in seed wound response and the manipulation of seed storage protein accumulation”, Dr Carol Wagstaff.

**Chenxi Liu**, ‘An evaluation of the prebiotic potential of microbial laevans’, Prof. Bob Rastall and Dr Dimitris Charalampopoulos

**Amin Asadi**, ‘Organolectic and rheological behaviour of alginate beads in a low fat system’, Dr Alan Bell and Prof. Richard Frazier

**Julie Bland**, ‘Jersey milk suitability for cheddar cheese production: Process, yield, quality and financial impacts’, Dr Alistair Grandson and Dr Colette Fagan

**Jie Zhong**, ‘The electrospinning of whey protein’, Dr Alan Bell and Dr Fred Davis

**Chenhao Jia**, ‘The Chinese national food control system: An evaluation of the controls on food exports’, Dr David Jukes and Dr Alistair Grandison
UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

UCAS day

It has been a very busy term for admissions. There were three UCAS visit days, which were a great success and great feedback from the applicants has been received. Dr Maria J Oruna-Concha has organised this event. These three days basically give applicants an opportunity to get a closer insight into the Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences. There were many activities during the day including talks about the Department by Professor Bob Rastall and Professor Richard Frazier and talks about the Industrial placement year by Elizabeth Andrews and Hannah Pettit (two of our final year students).

In addition there were talks by industry representatives from companies such as MARS, Pepsico, International Food Network, Exova, Sensient, Product Perceptions, Baxter Storey and ATC, a laboratory session with John Schollar, a flavour demonstration by Dr Jane Parker (manager of the Flavour Centre at Reading University) and finally all the applicants had an interview with an academic member of staff. In addition, our current students were around to answer questions and give their perspective on the department.

Prof Bob Rastall

Dr Maria J Oruna-Concha

We wish the applicants well in their forthcoming examinations and hope to see them again in October 2015. We look forward to another busy term and welcoming more applicants to the Department after the summer break.

POSTGRADUATE NEWS

The Second NRG PhD Conference

The NRG PHD Conference Organising Committee included Rosalind Fallaize, Yue Li, Michelle Weech, Anna Macready, Alice Turner, Dafni Vasilopoulou, Kumari Malkanthi Rathnayake, and Eiman AL Hinai. This student-led event was kindly sponsored by Pepsico, Institute of Food Science and Technology and Future Finance.

The second Hugh Sinclair Nutrition Research Group Doctoral Conference took place on Monday 16th February 2015 at the Madejski Lecture Theatre (Agriculture Building), University of Reading, UK. This exciting event aimed to showcase and communicate projects undertaken by current PhD students of the Nutrition Research Group, and student presenters from all years presented a fascinating range of innovative and original projects as oral presentations, poster presentations and 3-minute theses.

The event was attended by PhD and MSc Nutrition students from Reading, and also by jointly supervised PhD students from the University of Surrey. The 2015 PhD Conference was scheduled to coincide with the University of Reading’s Spring Enhancement Week, which is designed to enhance BSc student study skills and employability, and BSc final year Nutrition students were invited to attend for the first time.
The NRG PHD Conference Organising Committee

Presentations given by the PhD students at the NRG PhD conference
Special congratulations to the winners and runner-up of 3 minute presentation, poster and oral presentations and abstract.

**3-minute thesis (1st year)**
1st Prize: Simon Steenson
Runner-up: Sineaid Collins

**Poster Presentation (2nd year)**
1st Prize: Alex Stainer
Runner-up: Yue Li

**Oral Presentations (3rd year)**
1st Prize: Amber Shen
Runner-up: Mark Hobden

**Oral Presentations (4th year)**
1st Prize: Tania Cifuentes-Gomez
Runner-up: Steve Lee

**Best Abstract (all years)**
Kumari Rathnayake

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Winners (Kumari Malkanthi Rathnayake & Yuchi Shen) receiving the award at the PhD conference committee.

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**FOOD ATP NEWS**

**Spring News from the Food ATP**

**New Director**

The Food ATP would like to wish Professor Richard Frazier huge congratulations on his new post as Head of Department for Nutritional Sciences Department as of August this year. Richard will be therefore be moving on from the Food ATP to take on his new position and we are delighted to announce that Dr Carol Wagstaff will be joining the Food ATP as Director. We would like to wish both of them every success in there new posts.

**New Appointment**

The Food ATP would also like to wish a warm welcome to Dr Emma Bennett to the team; Emma is a previous PhD student and Teaching Fellow here at the University of Reading. Welcome aboard Emma!

**Module news**

The Food ATP students will be joining Carol Wagstaff later this month for back to back Sustainability modules.
The Food ATP is running the very successful **Sustainable Supply Systems** module which is led by Carol and will take the students off campus to visit The University’s own dairy farm - **Cedars**, along with a local trip out to salad and herb experts **Valley Produce**, who are based in Swallowfield and owned by Colin Hill. Thank you to Colin, who continues to work alongside the Food ATP and who is also the collaborating partner on a Knowledge Transfer Project to develop novel herb products. The students will also get to visit the Mars Drinks Factory in Basingstoke and see their production in action.

The following week brings the newly developed **Sustaining Crop Quality module**, again led by Carol. The module bring a large number of food experts in to meet and join the students in facilitated discussions, including Bakkavor’s very own Gary Spratt, Head of Agronomic Development and Innovation, who will be delivering a public lecture on "Maintaining the quality of fresh produce alongside sustainability – an industry perspective" on the 6th May.

Other news

The Food ATP’s Libby Good has got a number of events coming up in the next couple of months. The Food ATP will be exhibiting at the IFST’s annual conference later this month with the University of Nottingham’s Agri-Food ATP, and will be later attending the Campden BRI Open Day, a British Frozen Food Federations event and the Food Science and Technology Show.

2015 – What’s ahead?

The Food ATP will be hosting its next Industry Forum at Rothamsted Research with thanks to Peter Shewry. The forum will include presentations from the University of Reading’s own Adam Webb and Glenn Gibson, and will be topped off with a tour of the Rothamsted Research farm.

Lastly you can now follow the Food ATP on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) and [Twitter](https://www.twitter.com).

**FOODWASTENET NEWS**

FoodWasteNet, the BBSRC funded network in Industrial Biotechnology & Bioenergy, continues to grow and now has over 190 members. The network exhibited at WasteWorks, 22-25 March 2015 and hosted a seminar: *Food waste and pathways to valorisation* which included excellent talks from network members Paul Mines (Biome Technologies) and Demi Smoloktou (Total Worldfresh (TP UK)).

**FoodWasteNet Funding Schemes**

In February, FoodWasteNet awarded 3 Proof of Concept Funding awards to fund projects between industrial and academic partners. We are currently considering 5 applications for Business Interaction Vouchers and expect to make a maximum of 4 awards in this round. Details of both schemes (including forthcoming closing dates) are available on the FoodWasteNet website [www.foodwastenet.org](http://www.foodwastenet.org).

**Forthcoming event**

We are looking forward to welcoming up to 65 delegates to the next FoodWasteNet workshop *Processing Technologies for Recovering Value Added Components from Food Processing Waste* 16-17 July 2015, University of Reading. The workshop will be free-of-charge to members and examine current and
emerging technologies for exploiting post-harvest and food processing waste, focusing on extraction and separation of added-value products with viable market opportunities.

A range of case study presentations, from academia, industry and specialist processing facilities, will focus on two main themes:

- Current waste treatment practices by the UK agricultural and food industry, environmental sustainability, and options for food processing waste valorisation.
- Extraction and recovery of high added-value compounds from post-harvest and food processing waste

Booking application forms are available at www.foodwastenet.org until 22 May 2015.

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**STAFF LEAVING**

**Dr Jon Swann**

Unfortunately we had to say goodbye to Dr Jon Swann, Associate Professor in Metabolic Profiling, as he will be joining as a Senior lecturer at the Imperial College London.

**RETIREMENTS**

**Peter Swallow & Bruce Thomas**

The department said goodbye to Mr Bruce Thomas, a Food Processing Technician, and Mr Peter Swallow, IT technician, wishing them well on their retirement on February 27th. Bruce joined the ‘Department of Food Science and Technology’ in 1982, having previously worked at the NCFT in Weybridge. In that time Bruce supported the department and School in a wide range of activities during his 33 years with us; his commitment to the department was unquestionable. We hope Bruce will enjoy a well learned retirement, partaking in amateur dramatics and supporting a local heritage train line organisation. Peter has served the school well providing IT support over the years and assisting with numerous regular and sometimes urgent IT requests.
UPCOMING CONFERENCES/ MEETINGS:

12th European Nutrition Conference FENS 2015 (October 13th – 23rd 2015, Berlin, Germany)

The aim of this conference is to communicate up to date information obtained with scientific rigor and encouragement that could help the European citizens and consumers to manage a successful life and maintain healthy in all age periods.

For further information please visit the link: http://www.fensberlin2015.org/?seccion=information

The European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN)

The conference will be held in Lisbon, Portugal. The venue will be at the international Congress Centre of Lisbon (CCL) along the Tagus River, between the Jeronimos Monastery and the Belem Tower, both considered world heritage monuments.

ESPEN 2015 will be a great opportunity for physicians, dietitians, pharmacists, scientists and nurses dedicated to the field of nutrition and metabolism, to meet and discuss the most recent data in an informal atmosphere, strengthening old and new collaborations.

Dates & Deadlines
OPENING OF ABSTRACT SUBMISSION 12 JANUARY 2015
CLOSING OF ABSTRACT SUBMISSION 7 APRIL 2015
OPENING OF LATE BREAKING ABSTRACT SUBMISSION 15 MAY 2015
EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE 21 MAY 2015
DEADLINE FOR LATE BREAKING ABSTRACTS (POSTERS ONLY) 19 JUNE 2015

For further information please visit the link: http://www.espen.org/lisbon
The ISBNPA will host its 14th meeting in Edinburgh this year. The meeting will be held in Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) in the heart of the city centre. The scientific programme will consist of keynote, plenary lectures from world leading researchers. Parallel sessions of symposia, short orals and workshops will provide key updates and debate on recent progress in theory, methods and new findings related to physical activity and nutrition behaviour. Scientific poster sessions will feature informally during luncheon and also during two 90 minute sessions of plenary poster discussion.

Professor Mutrie is Chair of physical activity for health at the University of Edinburgh where she directs a newly established research centre on this topic (Physical Activity for Health Research Centre). Professor Anderson is a public health nutritionist and dietitian at the University of Dundee where she directs the Centre for Public Health Nutrition Research and co-directs the Centre for Research into Cancer Prevention and Screening.

With co-chairs in physical activity and nutrition you can be sure that the scientific programme will feature groundbreaking research findings, key debates and internationally renowned keynote speakers across both fields of physical activity and nutrition behaviour change.

For further information please visit the link: http://www.isbnpa2015.org/

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The ICBNPA 2015 aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results about all aspects of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. It also provides the premier inter-multi-disciplinary forum for researchers, practitioners and educators to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and concerns, practical challenges encountered and the solutions adopted in the field of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity.

**Important Dates**

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For further information please visit the link: http://waset.org/conference/2015/12/sydney/ICBNPA
**RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

Latest peer-reviewed publications from members of the Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences:


Markey O., Lovegrove, J. A. and Methven, L. Sensory profiles and consumer acceptability of a range of sugar-reduced products on the UK market. Food Research International. 2015; doi: 10.1016/j.foodres.2015.03.012


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Find out about our research seminars: [http://www.reading.ac.uk/food/](http://www.reading.ac.uk/food/) (Seminars)