



Science, Innovation, and a Genuine Spirit of Community

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For the past few years, AACCI International has striven to bring science to the forefront of the association. There is no better place this is evidenced than at the AACCI Annual Meeting. The 2012 AACCI Annual Meeting features an impressive lineup of top-notch scientists who will address important and novel challenges and share the latest innovations and solutions. This year we have changed the balance of the program to include more symposia and Science Cafés. This change was made to accommodate the many excellent ideas put forth by the sections and divisions, all of whom impressed us with their excellent suggestions and enthusiasm.

The result of these suggestions is a scientific program that highlights the major issues facing the industry today. Several symposia will focus on the latest issues in nutrition, including enzymes in cereal science, glucose control and gluten-free foods, and sugar, salt, and fat reduction. The growing issue of food allergens will also be looked at from all aspects, from product creation to stakeholder perspectives. As the industry is continually pushed to do more with less, the Science Café focusing on improving profitability through leveraging innovation and managing costs is more than timely. Also helping to manage costs, as well as perform food safety risk assessments and maintain labeling compliance, will be the Science Café on statistical tools, sharing how to best use today's statistics to better do our jobs. Hot topics are currently being developed to ensure they are as "hot" as they can be for the meeting in October. In addition, the program will explore some of the essentials of cereal grain science, including nonstarch carbohydrates. An area of our science that has been somewhat neglected, in this case cereal lipids, is featured, and the very latest knowledge and research in this area of cereal chemistry will be presented.

As much as I value the scientific presentations, I have to admit one of my favorite parts of the meeting is the impromptu discussions in the hallways. Through these interactions you are sure to receive interesting comments and suggestions from fellow scientists that you can take away, modify, and run with. Being challenged by my peers—"What about this?" or "Have you considered that?"—has led to most of my best work. There is simply a wonderful synergy to experience when you get away from constraints of everyday administration and have a little fun with your fellow scientists.

I would also recommend another aspect of the AACCI Annual Meeting experience—the opportunity to attend a Technical Committee meeting, learn about what the committees are looking at, and get involved. While you can learn a lot from a session, you can learn much more by doing! When you volunteer to work on a Technical Committee, you learn about issues, help solve problems, and advance and influence the science. In addition, you obtain access to a group of colleagues who are working to solve the same problems as you.

I would be the first to admit that planning the programming for this meeting has been a lot of work, but it is due to the dedicated efforts put forth by the entire program team. The scientific sessions are stellar, and the science, from the basics to the cutting-edge, is sure to help attendees in their everyday work.

Finally, it is difficult to plan a meeting without thinking about the first AACCI Annual Meeting I attended. It was in the late 1980s, and AACCI was meeting in San Diego. I was told I would be making not one but two presentations. I was very intimidated—here were the top scientists from around the world—but I quickly found everyone to be very warm and welcoming. It is that genuine spirit of community, along with the fantastic science, that has kept me coming back to the AACCI Annual Meeting every year since. It is that spirit in which I invite you to attend the 2012 AACCI Annual Meeting, September 30 – October 3, with your colleagues. I look forward to seeing you in Hollywood, FL.