

AACC International 2013 Board Election

Voting members will soon have the opportunity to cast their ballots for who they think will best lead our association. Board members play a major role in determining what programs and services AACC International provides to advance not only the industry but you as a member. The Nomination Committee has put forth the following list of candidates for the 2013 election. Running for president-elect is Gerard Downey. The president-elect will also later serve as president, followed by a year as chair of the board. Running for director are Matthew Morell and Koushik Seetharaman. The person elected to this position will serve a three year term as director, beginning the day after the 2013 AACCI Annual Meeting. Your involvement in this process is essential, and your vote is critical.

Candidate for President-Elect



Gerard Downey is a member and past (2006–2010) head of the Food Chemistry and Technology Department at the Ashtown Food Research Centre of Teagasc, Ireland's Agriculture and Food Development Agency. He also holds the post of adjunct full professor in the School of Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Science at University College Dublin; is a Fellow of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry

(IUPAC); and is a recipient of the Tomas Hirschfeld Award for Outstanding Achievements in Near Infrared Spectroscopy (2006). He is a founding member of the Irish Chemometrics Group.

Arising from studies on cereal NIR analysis, Gerard's main research interests lie in the application of fingerprint spectroscopic techniques (near infrared, mid-infrared, and Raman) and multivariate data analysis to the rapid and nondestructive measurement of food (including cereals) quality and authenticity. He was responsible for the introduction of NIR to the Irish grain trade for wheat and barley payment purposes and for devising and implementing a system of oversight to monitor and control instrument performance at remote sites across the island.

Currently a member of the Board of Cereals&Europe, Gerard recently served as a member of the AACCI Board of Directors and has been invited to serve on the 2010–2015 Skim Milk Powder Advisory Group of the United States Pharmacopeia. He has participated widely in large, multinational EU research projects (QUEST, FAIM, STAFANIR, FLAIR-FLOW EUROPE, and TRACE) at both research and project management levels and has coordinated or participated in many nationally funded R&D projects. Between 2001 and 2005, he served as the elected chair of the International Council for Near Infrared Spectroscopy (ICNIRS) and has served on the AACCI Membership Task Force and Publications Panel and participated in the work of the AACCI Near Infrared Analysis Committee.

Through his activities and service as an AACCI director, Gerard is familiar with the overall structure and operation of the association and the issues of relevance and excellence that it faces. His experience in dealing with people from different countries, backgrounds, and professional interests gained through his participation in and management of EU and U.S. projects has provided him with strong, general managerial skills. Given the increasingly global reach of AACCI and the need for sophisticated communication and interaction with disparate interest groups, his personal background and success in people and project management represent important attributes he can bring to this office. Serving as chair of ICNIRS brought

particular challenges with regard to its nonsubscription membership base and varying national representation. Nonetheless, while chair, he succeeded in obtaining an agreement to levy attendance at biennial conferences and initiated an education subgroup to provide online course material for distance learning. His organizational skills were of value when he organized the IASIM-10 international imaging conference in Dublin in 2010—especially when the planned venue became unavailable seven days before the event, and he had to find an alternative location!

Gerard's Views. AACCI must continue to aspire to and deliver on being the world's leading technical resource for cereal science knowledge and, in the broadest sense, education at all stages of members' careers. To do this, we must think big and act as a focal point to directly involve all the relevant major players. The recent development in bringing together senior staff from the cereals industry to begin a two-way conversation must be the starting point for a wider rollout of similar initiatives—initiatives that should stretch beyond the United States to the increasingly important international community. AACCI is well-placed to serve the international community and assist in broader knowledge dissemination activities using all of the modern technologies at our disposal. Targeting efforts toward audiences in emerging eastern countries must become a reality in the near future to underpin membership and development opportunities over the next decade.

Interaction with government is an area to which AACCI should bring its resources. Access to the best technical knowledge is not enough; we must ensure that we detect signs of government concern or interest at the earliest possible time through a system of horizon scanning. This needs to be organized using our membership base, and an efficient conduit into AACCI headquarters needs to be established and nurtured. Our members are spread throughout many other learned organizations, and through this resource, AACCI should be alert to the possibilities arising from cooperation with other organizations in a spirit of genuine cooperation, while being aware of the necessity for a sound business case for all our activities.

I believe that AACCI needs to increase its visibility and knowledge of its strengths at the ground level in countries outside the United States, where major membership growth opportunities exist. This should preferably take place through a series of planned person-to-person discussions (e.g., at conferences or other meetings) through input into European Union or other funded activities. A candidate with experience in speaking to people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and nationalities would be a key asset in such interactions. The collection, sifting, and evaluation of the views of members and potential members is critical to the long-term success and viability of the association. This must be a key activity in the

future and may require the development of specific or low-key feedback sessions at the AACCI Annual Meeting to kick-off activity related to this task.

Finally, the future of AACCI depends on the recruitment and involvement of students at key events such as the annual meeting. There continues to be a need to set specific objectives for concrete activities that involve students in association functions (e.g., symposium co-chairs, etc.) rather than merely as participants. Greater interaction with the AACCI Student Division may be one way to do this.

Finally, I believe that the association merits a higher profile in the United States and elsewhere. One way to achieve this might be the inauguration of a series of planned public talks by key members on topical issues at the highest level. The AACCI president, as the face of the association, must play a key role in driving any such initiative.

Candidates for Director



Matthew Morell has been actively involved in R&D in agriculture and food for 35 years. He completed undergraduate and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Sydney Australia in agricultural science and then worked for three years in the United States at UC Davis and then Michigan State with Jack Priess on starch synthesis in cereals. Upon returning to Australia he worked on photosynthesis for a number of years before moving to CSIRO and taking up

leadership positions in starch and grain quality research. Matthew has published more than 100 papers in international peer-reviewed journals and a further 70 non-refereed publications. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering.

During his scientific career, Matthew has been actively involved in the commercialization of R&D, including the establishment of two spin-out ventures (Arista Cereal Technologies and the BARLEYmax Joint Venture) and is involved in a range of significant contracted R&D activities with the grains industry (through farmer check-offs) and major life science and food companies. He has a keen appreciation of the commercial drivers of both major and small- to medium-size companies and their needs in accessing R&D and human resources.

Matthew has been a consistent attendee at AACCI meetings over the past decade and has presented a number of papers. He is a member of the AACCI Scientific Advisory Panel, an AACCI Fellow, a recipient of the Phil Williams Applied Research Award (2011), and a member of the AACCI Downunder Section and has been an editor of *Cereal Chemistry*. In Australia, Matthew has been a member of the Cereal Chemistry Division of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute and is a council member of the division's successor, the Australian Grain Science Association (AGSA). He has significant experience in leading and managing large organizational units and is currently managing a program involving 120 staff with a budget of AU\$30 million at nine locations in Australia. In this role he is responsible for the science, commercialization strategy and delivery, budget, business development activities, and communication strategy. Key attributes Matthew would bring to the position of AACCI director include

- 1) A passion for the grains industry and its future development

- 2) A strong focus on high-quality science
- 3) Experience in leading interdisciplinary research
- 4) Extensive experience in the interface between public sector R&D and industry
- 5) Extensive experience in the communication of science to consumers and industry
- 6) An international perspective coupled with a working familiarity with the North American grains industry
- 7) Awareness of and involvement with the major global challenges in agriculture and food production and the role that grain science can play in bringing forward solutions
- 8) Experience and capability in managing people and resources to achieve desired outcomes

Matthew's Views. AACCI has a critical role to play in providing industry and science leadership for the grains industry, both in North America and around the globe. While today's environment can be difficult, many of the difficulties the grain industry faces (profitability, sustainability, regulatory, and under- and over-nutrition) have a strong science and leadership dimension in which AACCI has the opportunity to be a thought leader and influence direction. AACCI should be the port of first call for its annual meeting, R&D services, grain education resources, grain advocacy, and leadership.

There are a number of areas where I believe I can bring expertise and insight to assist in the oversight of the operations and strategies of AACCI:

- 1) As an internationally based director, I can assist AACCI in playing a key role in fostering international R&D collaboration. More could be done to forge relationships across regions, disciplines, and professional societies to cross-fertilize the science and empower advocacy for greater impact. AACCI's programs need to be truly international.
- 2) AACCI also has a critical role to play as a "trusted advisor" and disseminator of balanced information and analysis in sensitive and emerging issues. I have significant expertise in working with genetic modification (GM) issues in Australia. The trust of consumers, legislators, and regulators is critical. AACCI must continue to ensure its advocacy is based on robust science.
- 3) Differences in regional regulatory and legislative arrangements are a major impediment to technology adoption and value. AACCI should play a leadership role to aid in harmonizing regulations and legislation.
- 4) Science is increasingly conducted by large teams, often interdisciplinary and often geographically and globally dispersed. AACCI needs to adapt to this changing science environment.
- 5) Regional differences in acceptance of novel technologies, such as GM, affect the value proposition and investment climate for new technologies. AACCI has a role to play in addressing such issues globally.
- 6) Many countries are facing future shortages of grain and food scientists. AACCI has a critical role to play in attracting students and supporting and nurturing their career development.
- 7) I have a strong personal commitment to gender and diversity equity and would encourage AACCI to provide leadership in these areas.

As an AACCI director, I would bring focus to two particular areas. I would work to both deepen and expand the scientific horizons of the AACCI science and communication program,

encourage AACCI to support the highest quality scientific program, and support its journals to be the best in their publication domain. I see tremendous opportunities to cross-fertilize the science program by linking with other areas relevant to grain science—environmental science, biomedical, and materials science—to reinvigorate our agenda. As a scientist based outside North America, I would also bring a strong global focus to the role. I believe that AACCI has an outstanding opportunity to provide global leadership in grain science, and one of my key objectives as a director would be to encourage AACCI to extend its efforts to be globally inclusive and to have genuine global outreach in its activities.



Koushik Seetharaman is an associate professor and Cereals Research Chair at the University of Guelph. After graduating from Texas A&M University with a Ph.D. degree, he worked as a consultant to the food industry for two years before returning to academia as a faculty member at Pennsylvania State University. Five years ago, Koushik established the graduate Cereal Sciences program in the Food Science Department at the University of Guelph, with a research program focused on biopolymer interactions, particularly those related to starch and protein. The program is a collaborative effort built on active interactions with stakeholders at all levels of the value chain. Over the past 10 years, 15 of the students he has advised have graduated. He has also authored more than 70 peer-reviewed publications.

Currently, Koushik is mentoring more than 35 graduate students, postdoctoral research associates, research fellows, and visiting students and is involved with active collaborations in more than half a dozen universities around the world. Koushik teaches an undergraduate course in cereal science and coordinates workshops on flour quality and fundamentals of baking. He is also actively involved in international rural development programs and has worked or is working on projects in a number of countries, including Namibia, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Koushik joined AACCI as a graduate student in 1991 and was part of an early group of students who re-energized the AACCI Student Division. He has since been an active member of the AACCI Carbohydrate Division, organized a number of symposia, and in general has climbed the ranks through service at various levels of the association. He is currently a member of the AACCI Centennial Planning Committee, Scientific Advisory Panel, and Texture Technologies Awards Committee and is vice program chair for 2012 and the incoming program chair for 2013.

Koushik's Views. My worldview is grounded in the notion of service and the value of service. These values were instilled early in my life and were nurtured by my Ph.D. advisors, Dr. Rooney and the late Dr. Waniska, who introduced me to AACCI. AACCI and its members have been my scientific mentors and peer group for more than two decades. In due turn, I have served the association and have encouraged younger members to take an active role in its workings. The sustenance of an organization is dependent on younger generations taking leadership roles and promoting the values of the institution. Toward this goal, as a board member I will continue to create opportunities and facilitate mentorship programs, as well as create sustainable financial

assistance programs to support increased student participation both nationally and internationally.

AACCI has earned a place of prominence globally due to the expertise of its membership. Looking forward, I believe we need to improve on our use of synergies among industry, academia, and government to position science-based knowledge related to cereals on issues relevant to regulators, consumers, and the industry value chain. Within this context there are creative opportunities for the association to leverage, support, and promote research funding and to lobby in an effort to increase the share of research funds directed toward all themes that are relevant to AACCI.

There is a need to build synergies among science and scientists in countries from Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Africa and to develop strategies to bring these advances to the broader audience globally through meetings, symposia, and publications. Moving forward, these efforts will tie in well with global changes and issues related to climate change, changes in the grain value chain, and other challenges that will require close attention.

It has been my pleasure to be a member of AACCI, and it is an honor to be nominated for a position on the AACCI Board of Directors. Along with the team, I will do my part to implement the current visions and goals of the association, as well as build on our current achievements to elevate the association as a global leader on issues related to our science.

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