



Chicago Section IFT the First Section

Illinois C-FAR Committee Update Nate Matusheski, C-FAR Chair



Nate Matusheski represents the Chicago Section IFT at the annual C-FAR meeting, serves as a voting delegate and communications contact, and was recently elected Vice Chair for the new C-FAR Specialty Crops/Wheat/Allied Industries Caucus.

Nate is a Nutrition Research Scientist at Kraft Foods R&D in Glenview, IL; a graduate of Penn State University (B.S. Food Science, B.S. Nutrition Science) and the University of Illinois (Ph.D., Human Nutrition).

The Illinois Council on Food and Agricultural Research (C-FAR) was created in 1993 with the aim of advancing research and outreach in the fields of food and agriculture in our State. In support of this proposition, the Illinois Food and Agriculture Research Act was signed into law in 1995, providing a yearly State research appropriation.

In the past, C-FAR has distributed the State appropriation (once as much as \$15 million) among partner institutions including the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Southern Illinois University, Illinois State University and Western Illinois University. The research funds have supported the development of new research programs in key areas of importance, including human nutrition, food safety, and the development of new bioenergy crops as alternatives for corn ethanol. On average, each dollar of C-FAR research spending has been leveraged to generate four dollars of research funding from national agencies.

Last year, the C-FAR appropriation was zeroed out due to the prevailing financial difficulties the State has been experiencing. This means that the research programs previously funded by C-FAR have been put on hold, discontinued, or forced to seek alternative funding. The C-FAR Legislative Affairs group continues to focus on getting the C-FAR appropriation included as a line item in the 2011 State budget. In support of this initiative, C-FAR has also been restructured to reflect the key food and agricultural revenue drivers for our State, including corn, soybean, pork/beef/dairy and specialty crops/wheat/allied industries. This reorganization will assist in clearly communicating how the reinstatement of C-FAR funding will boost the economic growth of these key sectors in Illinois.

Funding for Food and Agricultural research is critical for generating sustainable competitive advantage through new value-added technologies for our sector. In these difficult economic times, Illinois C-FAR continues to need the support of the Chicago IFT, actively guiding the basic research agenda, and voicing our support for the critical importance of food and agricultural research in Illinois. If you are interested in drafting a letter of your support for C-FAR to your local legislators, please contact C-FAR chair Nate Matusheski at Nathan.Matusheski@kraft.com.

More information on Illinois C-FAR can be found at: <http://www.ilcfar.org/>