

## 19. EDUCATION

SAAFoST has always been an education-oriented entity with educational institutions being well represented on branch committees and Council. Lectures, mainly after-hours, by prominent scientists and other knowledgeable individuals started soon after the association was established and activity steadily expanded to include workshops, symposia and the first biennial congress at the University of Cape Town in September 1970. The focus later included students with book prizes and Academic Achievement Awards being presented to outstanding students in the seventies and the Koeppen and Undergraduate Awards being introduced in the eighties. The Matriculant Bursary started in 2007 with the first recipient graduating in 2010.

By 2010 SAAFoST was offering educational bursaries, scholarships, grants and awards to the value of almost a million Rand, half of which was administered for a few years, on behalf of the Food & Beverage Sector Education Training Authority (FoodBev-SETA) the remaining half being funded by SAAFoST.

These consisted of the following in 2010:

R 225 000 for nine SAAFoST Matriculant/Undergraduate Bursars

R 140 000 for seven Aubrey Parsons (final year) Study Grants

R 7 000 for seven SAAFoST Academic Achievement Awards

R 25 000 for one Brian Koeppen Memorial Scholarship (Postgraduate)

R 15 000 for a range of Eskom Young Scientist Awards

R 5 000 for one Dreosti Award for Best Congress Oral Presentation by a young scientist

R 5 000 for one Ginsburg Award for Best Congress Poster by a young scientist

R500 000 for twenty FoodBev SETA Postgraduate Awards

### **New Product Competitions**

New product exhibitions held in the mid-nineties by final semester Food Technology students quickly developed into annual events and, by the late nineties, included all of the FS&T universities in the Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. The exhibitions were given a boost by the introduction, prior to the events, of new product workshops, addressed by experts from the food industry, to familiarise students with the basics of new product development and so assist them with their projects. Prizes offered by SAAFoST and industry for individuals or teams judged to have presented the best products and supporting project documentation had become the norm by 2010 and stimulated further interest in what had become a keenly contested competition.

### **Students-on-Site / Select-a-Student**

In order to assist FS&T students and graduates, who had to be SAAFoST members, find work, whether for in-service training, holiday jobs or starting new careers in the food and allied industries, the Select-a-Student service was introduced in January 2010. Students provided basic information, such as contact numbers and addresses, preferred type of work and geographical location, qualification and availability, etc., which was placed on the SAAFoST website. SAAFoST members and potential employers were alerted to the availability of the students and advised to negotiate with them directly. Up to 25 student names would appear at the beginning of the year and dwindle to single digit figures as the year progressed, suggesting that students had found employment but whether this was

due to the website or to their own efforts was never determined. Students were expected to advise the Association as soon as they found employment and to update their particulars on a two-monthly basis if they wished to remain on the site.

### **Career Pamphlets**

SAAFoST published two career pamphlets over the years aimed at recruiting students into the Food Science and Technology profession and promoting the degree and diploma courses available at Universities and Technikons. These served the association well for over a decade. The first leaflet was printed in the late seventies and was updated in the eighties but by the nineties the pamphlet had given way to website information and later, career compact discs (CD's) and digital video discs (DVD's).

### **Career Compact Discs (CD's), Digital Video Discs (DVD's) and Website**

In 2005 career information and promotion was further improved through the production of a DVD and complementary CD, copies of which were distributed in hundreds, by hand and through the post, to schools, universities, individuals and other interested parties. The former was prepared under the guidance of David Watson and titled, "Food Science Presentation", the latter was compiled by Owen Frisby with the assistance of the TUT Multimedia Department and titled, "Food Science and Technology as a Career". The former, structured as a movie, was a general and fast moving introduction to the food industry and the food technologist's role in it and was intended for an audience of scholars, career guidance teachers and parents. The career CD was aimed at the individual wanting more in-depth detail on the career and it provided such information as typical activities, scope of knowledge, course content and duration, links to FS&T universities and information on SAAFoST including the all-important Code of Conduct. The CD was updated in 2006/7 and again in 2008/9 after which it was transferred to the SAAFoST website to facilitate 24-hour national access and regular updating.

### **Career roadshows**

The roadshow was started as a one-day programme of career oriented subjects, presented by food science and other professionals, to final year students of Food Science and Technology. The programme was found to be too demanding and was later shortened to a half-day event featuring eight to ten speakers with presentations of fifteen to twenty minutes each.

The object of the project was to bring experienced and knowledgeable people from the food and allied industries into contact with young people and help prepare them for their careers ahead. The contact and subject matter provided insight into what graduates could expect from the food sector that they were about to enter and also gave them an idea of what the sector would expect of them. The roadshow, together with food science and technology promotion DVD's and CD's for career guidance counsellors and students respectively, was part of SAAFoST's campaign to attract the best students to a career in food science and technology.

Career roadshows were the brainchild of Nigel Sunley and were organised annually by Owen Frisby, Executive Director of SAAFoST. They were held in Durban (at the Durban Institute of Technology, later the Durban University of Technology), Pretoria (for

students at the Tshwane University of Technology, the University of Pretoria and University of Johannesburg) and in Cape Town (for Cape Peninsula University of Technology and University of Stellenbosch final year students). Collectively, about thirty speakers would address in the order of two hundred students on an annual basis in the three centres, covering, typically, the following ten subjects: i) An overview of the food industry in South Africa; ii) The semi-commercial and research environment; iii) Opportunities and work in retail; iv) Food industry suppliers - ingredients; v) Opportunities in food manufacture – quality, product development & production; vi) The role of legislation in the food industry; vii) A recent graduate reports back on his/her work experience; viii) The type of staff and skills the food industry is looking for; ix) How to motivate and market yourself to an employer; x) SAAFoST - an association for food science and technology professionals.

Students became acquainted with a number of the region's most prominent food professionals, their companies, careers, products, brands and passions while speakers renewed friendships and networking opportunities and educational institutions made valuable and lasting industry contacts. SAAFoST has been most fortunate in always being able to rely on uniquely dedicated and supportive members who gladly and enthusiastically make themselves available to support good educational causes.

### **The Continuing Education Programme (CEP)**

The SAAFoST Continuing Education Programme (CEP) conceived by Ron Timm, was started to assist Food Science / Technology and other member graduates keen to update and upgrade their knowledge, by assessing and then endorsing, with a specially designed CEP logo, quality courses that were deemed to offer, i) value for money, ii) sufficient, sound content pitched at Post Graduate level and that were iii) presented by recognised educational institutions or organisations, using appropriately qualified, capable and experienced, senior lecturers, registered natural scientists or equivalents. Prior to CEP endorsement, a final programme and presenter CV's had to be submitted to SAAFoST.

Further requirements included a test of the delegate's knowledge at the end of the event, the issuing of a certificate of competence, the completion of a questionnaire to monitor delegate satisfaction and free registration for a SAAFoST appointed delegate to attend and evaluate the course. SAAFoST in return would promote the course amongst Members, place details on the website and if deemed necessary, conduct beforehand, a membership survey to determine interest in the subject matter on offer. Some of the CEP-endorsed courses included the following:

- (1) Six Steps to Sensory Evaluation. Presented Dr Henriëtte de Kock and Dept. Food Science, University of Pretoria (26 to 27 January 2005; 11 March 2008; 23-24 June 2009, 18-19 August 2009).
- (2) A Short Course in Dairy Science. Presented by Prof. Patrick F Fox, University College, Cork. Ireland. Venue: University of Pretoria (UP), 14 to 22 February 2005.
- (6) Consumer Sensory Evaluation. Presented by Dr Henriëtte de Kok and colleagues Department of Food Science, University of Pretoria (21 to 23 June 2005; 2-3 November 2009).

- (3) Food Allergen Seminar. Dr Harris Steinman (FACTS) and prominent local and international speakers from the USA, Canada and the UK. (23 June 2005)
- 4) Prebiotics Workshop by Paul van Oostende from Orafiti, plus local speakers, for FACTS. Cape Town. (30 March 2006).
  
- (5) Towards a Working Model for HACCP and Food Safety in Catering and Food Service. Prof Alex von Holy & Prof Chris Griffith. Von Holy Consulting cc. Johannesburg. (7 and 8 March 2006).
- (6) Biochemistry of Cheese Ripening. Dr Elna Buys & colleagues. Dept Food Science, University of Pretoria. (5 to 8 September 2006).