

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



BIENNIAL GENERAL MEETING

MINUTES

DATE: 06 SEPTEMBER 2005

TIME: 17:15

VENUE: ENDLER HALL UNIVERSITY OF
STELLENBOSCH

1. PRESENT

The BGM was attended by seventy-one members and Chaired by the President, Mr Nigel Sunley.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were **NOTED** for: Mr D Brown, Mr P Bush, Ms K Debuchant, Mrs K O'Dowd, Prof A Minnaar, Mr GT Momple, Dr P van Twisk, Mr J Visser and Prof A von Holy.

3. READING AND CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The meeting confirmed the minutes of the BGM held on 2 September 2003, after being proposed by Dr Parsons and seconded by Dr Sigge.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President then presented his report for the two years 2003 – 2005.

It is with pleasure that I table this report of SAAFoST activities during the period 2003-2005.

This period has been an exceptionally busy and successful one for the association, during which many of the benefits of the strategic plan formulated in 2001 have come to fruition. The reality we have faced is that, notwithstanding the enormous amount of time and effort put in by volunteers, it has become necessary, in the context of the changing environment in which we operate, to put the Association on a sound commercially driven footing and employ paid staff to administer our activities. This strategy, which carried an initial degree of financial risk, has however proved to be highly successful. There can be no doubt that the appointment of Owen Frisby as Executive Director has enabled us to take SAAFoST to new levels of effectiveness and to undertake a range of activities that would previously just not have been possible. Owen's passion and dedication speak for themselves and I personally and the whole of SAAFoST are indeed fortunate to have someone of his calibre in this position – I would like to sincerely thank him for a level of commitment that goes far beyond that of a paid employee.

A further development on the administrative front has been our decision to hand over our membership and financial administration to a professional body in the shape of Van der Walt and Co. As an accounting firm specializing in the administrative management of professional bodies, they are well suited to handling this function and, after the inevitable minor teething troubles following the handover, we now have excellent administrative support services in place and are increasingly moving these into the electronic age with obvious benefits in terms of speed and cost. I would like to thank Jean Venter of Van der Walt & Co, who also acts as our National Secretary and his staff for their assistance and support and look forward to an ongoing good working relationship.

In terms of membership, we currently stand at around 1600 members. The Secretariat has done a fine job of maintaining our sizeable database and also keeping the fees coming in! A major innovation driven by Owen Frisby has been the introduction of the Custodian membership category. Custodian members are companies that have made a strong commitment to SAAFoST and pay higher membership fees in return for a more personalized service. To date we have recruited around 45 Custodian members and I would like to thank them very much for their support. We are however always on the look out for new members and appeal to all existing SAAFoST members to spread the word and recruit new members. It is also our intention to employ a full-time Membership Development Officer to assist in the recruitment drive, support existing members and take some of the routine administrative workload off the shoulders of the Executive Director, leaving him with more time to drive new initiatives and services for our members.

The heart and lifeblood of SAAFoST activities has always been the branches. Branch activities over the last two years have continued at regular intervals with a wide range of activities and speakers. The highlight was perhaps the two talks given to the Northern and Cape Branches by Sean Summers – we were privileged to be the only audiences to whom he was prepared to talk on the subject of the Pick'n Pay product tampering scare, a subject of major relevance to our members, and we are most appreciative of his willingness to discuss this extremely sensitive matter.

We have also held a number of larger events over the 2003-2005 periods. The In-gredients symposium organized by the Cape Branch and held in Cape Town in March 2004 was highly successful with an excellent turnout. June 2004 saw the workshop on AIDS and Nutrition organized by the Northern Branch with a sell-out attendance and considerable press coverage. Then the 2nd Biennial SAAFoST Exhibition and Talk-shop held in Pretoria in September 2004 built on the strength of its predecessor and looks like becoming a key event in the food industry calendar. The main SAAFoST event however remains the Biennial Congress, and the Pretoria congress held in September 2003 was undoubtedly our best ever in terms of both content and attendance. The Cape Branch has vigorously taken up the challenge for 2005 and there can be no doubt that they are well on the way to matching or surpassing the 2003 success story.

The last two years have been a period in which, with the additional resources now available to us, SAAFoST has started to take active steps to get involved in broader issues facing our profession. In the field of education we face, along with other scientific disciplines, major concerns regarding the shortage of competent young scientists. We are approaching this problem by implementing a program for school career advisers highlighting the opportunities for food science and technology as a career and dispelling, by means of a specially commissioned DVD, the misconception that food science and technology are nothing more than glorified cookery! We have also introduced a series of seminars for final year food science and technology students at which career opportunities are discussed and some insight into potential working environments is given. Both initiatives are in their infancy but first impressions are good and we will be building on these. The annual student projects evenings continue to thrive but we would like to see more involvement from industry in these, as they provide a unique opportunity for potential employers to observe at first hand the scientific and creative abilities of our students. For our mainstream membership, we have started a program of accreditations for selected training courses and have become involved in obtaining SACNASP accreditation for SAAFoST as a professional body and in raising awareness of SACNASP accreditation for individuals in view of the classification of food science as a registered field of practice for natural scientists.

Our other drive has been to become more active as a lobbying body and as a source of credible scientific information on food. We actively participated in the consultation process for the draft amendments to Regulation 101, which could potentially have brought many foods under the control of the Medicines Act, and which we strongly opposed. We will be participating in both the recently announced Food Safety Initiative launched by the CGCSA and the move to establish a single food control authority for South Africa – the latter continues to be a very slow process but we will continue our efforts in this area. The Sudan Red scare in March 2005, which resulted in SAAFoST being extensively quoted in the Sunday Times front page stories on this subject, highlighted the major deficiencies that exist in the local regulatory bodies, particularly in regard to enforcement, and it is regrettable that so little attention is being paid by government to this issue, which in my opinion will continue to be a major health concern long after the HIV-AIDS issue has been resolved unless action is taken now. Our concerns have been further highlighted by government's seeming inability to finally complete the long-standing revisions to food labelling and advertising regulations. It is frankly a disgrace that this matter has not yet been resolved and, in the meantime, the South African consumer is the loser.

I would however like to conclude on a positive note with what has undoubtedly been the highlight of my term as President, namely our successful bid to hold the 2010 World Congress of Food Science and Technology in South Africa under the auspices of IUFoST. This is a real coup for the whole South African food community and we should feel proud to have been offered this unique opportunity, which will coincide with SAAFoST's 50th anniversary. As is now well known, the 2010 Congress will be held in Cape Town in August, just after the end of the soccer World Cup. The SAAFoST Council have discussed in detail the need to accommodate the 2010 event without putting excessive strain on our resources. Among the decisions taken is that the 2007 Biennial Congress will proceed as planned in KwaZulu-Natal but the 2009 Congress will be cancelled and replaced with several smaller and less resource-intensive events during the period 2008-2009. Following the 2010 IUFoST Congress, we will revert to our normal two-year cycle, with the 2012 Congress to be held in Gauteng. There will also be certain temporary changes made to the periods of office for SAAFoST office bearers and these will be advised in due course. I consider myself privileged to have been asked to chair the Organising Committee for the 2010 event and in turn ask you all for support in making this the biggest and most successful food-related event ever held in South Africa.

Finally, I would like to thank all members, Branch Committees, the Secretariat and the SAAFoST Council for their support over the last two years. It has been a memorable period for me personally, and one I shall always remember with great fondness. I believe we have an exceptionally strong organization and one of the best of its type in global terms, and I look forward to assisting my successor in taking SAAFoST to further heights.

The meeting then **APPROVED** the 2005 Presidential report after it was proposed by Mr Frisby and seconded by Mrs Maguire.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Treasurer, Mrs de Fleuriot, presented the audited financial statements for the period. She mentioned that the financial year-end has been changed to end December to match the trading cycle of the association. Messrs Harris Dowden and Fontaine have been appointed as auditors.

With reference to the financial statements, she referred to the new Custodian Membership. Interest revenue is doing very well with some of the portfolio in money market accounts.

Net income for the period of 18 months was R474 000 and total assets stood at R1 908 645. New plans to invest some of the reserves into the development of young scientists through increased bursaries as well as with new audio visual marketing products for the period were presented.

Mrs de Fleuriot then sought approval for subscription fees for 2007/2008

Institution Member	R780
Professional Member	R265
Member	R240
Student Member	R75
Custodian Member	R6 500

RESOLVED to approve the 2007/2008 subscription fees as tabled, excluding VAT. It was proposed by Dr Parsons and seconded by Dr Sigge.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

The President advised that the President-elect has given notice of resignation.

The meeting **NOTED** that the President-elect Dr Anthos Yannakou would be unable to take up the position of President due to his acceptance of a position in Australia. It was **RESOLVED** that the position of President for the period 2005-2007 would be taken up by the successful candidate for the position of President-elect 2005-2007 and that fresh elections for the position of President-elect 2005-2007 would be held.

The National Secretary then announced the nominees for the positions of Vice President, Dr Jessy van Wyk and President Elect, Mr David Watson. The nominations were unopposed.

The President then announced the new Council representatives:

KwaZulu Natal
Mrs Lizette de Fleuriot
Ms Madeleine Jansen

Cape Branch

Dr Gunnar Sigge
Ms Morongwa Themba
Mrs Rosie Maguire
Dr Jessy van Wyk

Northern Branch

Mrs Jaci Barnett
Prof. Lucia Anelich
Mr Nigel Sunley
Mr David Watson

Retiring Council Members

Mr Ron Timm
Dr Bernard Cole
Dr Maurice Kort

8. BRANCH REPORTS

NOTED written reports tabled by the Branch representatives.

9. OBITUARY

NOTED and advised that Mr Jeff Knock passed away last year. Mr Knock was a Founding Member of SAAFoST.

10. HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

The President then proposed Honorary Life Membership be awarded to Mr Ron Timm. The President referred to Mr Timm's role in the strategic plan of SAAFoST, his many years of service on Council and the Northern Branch and his life-long dedication to SAAFoST. The proposal of the President was seconded by Dr Kort and accepted unanimously.

Mr Timm said that it was a great honour to be granted life membership and he hoped to continue his very rewarding association with SAAFoST. He urged all members to fully participate in the various events continuously on offer in order to enjoy the many benefits that membership of SAAFoST has to offer.

11. CLOSURE

The President then thanked members present and closed the meeting at 18:00.