

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Announces Development of National Food Science Fundamentals Competency Assessment and Pre-Professional Certification

Given the recent efforts to increase the quantity and quality of food produced, the heightened awareness of the health effects of certain types of foods, and the enhanced focus on the environmental effects of food production, job growth in the food science industry is expected. To help ensure a quality workforce, the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) announces the development of a national standards-based competency assessment measuring fundamental knowledge and skills in food science. The assessment is aligned with industry standards, the National Career Clusters Initiative, and the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education.

Adhering to gold standards for effective testing, the computer-based assessment provides a mechanism for competency measurement, program accountability, and program improvement. Successful testing qualifies individuals for recognition and documentation through a corresponding Pre-professional Certification in Food Science Fundamentals. The assessment and certification address competencies and a skill set necessary for success as a pre-professional in careers with a substantial focus on food science. There are usage applications in a broad range of secondary and post-secondary education, staff development, and human resource settings. This assessment and certification will facilitate employment in early career ladder positions and promote continuing education at the post-secondary level preparing for careers associated with food science, food safety, food quality, food technology, and food preservation and packaging.

Developed by National Food Science Professionals

AAFCS has engaged the assistance of a broad range of esteemed scientists, educators, and other professionals in food science from across the nation to assist in identifying relevant industry standards and to develop the assessment instrument. Recognizing the value of a solid assessment tool in assuring effective preparation of individuals with appropriate and fundamental food science knowledge and skills, the following stakeholders participated on the development panel for the assessment and certification:

- Ellen Bradley, River City Food Group LLC, Portland, OR
- Bruce Ferree, California Natural Products, Lathrop, CA
- Beverley Hammond, Thermador, BSH Test Kitchens, LaFollette, TN
- Josie Landon, Heinz North America, Ontario, OR
- Tom Nack, General Mills, Golden Valley, MN
- Sarah Olhorst, Institute for Food Technologists, Washington, DC
- Michelle Perchonok, NASA Shuttle Food System and Advanced Food Technology, Houston, TX
- Larry Steenson, Danisco USA, Inc., New Century, KS
- Renee Boyer, Virginia Tech University, Blacksburg, VA
- Claudine Laing-Kean, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
- Kim Gayle Best-Smith, Cary High School, Cary, NC
- Susan Turgeson, Menomonie High School, Menomonie, WI

Assessment Launch and Further Information

The Food Science Fundamentals assessment and certification are part of a portfolio of pre-professional level assessment and industry-recognized certification products by AAFCS and will be available for use in 2010-11. For further information please contact: Lori Myers; Director of Pre-Professional Assessment and Certification; 703-706-4600; LMyers@aafcs.org; www.aafcs.org.

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) national organization has a proud 101-year history of providing support and leadership for family and consumer sciences professionals. AAFCS has a well-established credentialing center that includes accreditation of university programs, professional level assessments and certifications, and the assessment and certification of pre-professionals.

