

58th Australian Cereal Chemistry Conference— Outstanding Program Attracted International Speakers, Provided Something for Everyone

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A broad-reaching program successfully attracted many attendees to the 58th Australian Cereal Chemistry Conference. Held this year on the beautiful Queensland Gold Coast beaches with rolling surf not far from the conference rooms, the speakers may have expected local scenic competition, but it was not to be as all speakers enjoyed well-attended sessions.

The program was a journey from recent advances in cereal sciences, with a range of topics linking the results of the powerful genetic technologies, to the functional properties of a variety of cereal grains. It covered developments and new understandings in nutrition and cereal quality and also included updates in traditional products and considerations of future opportunities. Other areas of the program covered biofuels, grains for animal feeds, and a hot topic in Australia—the new deregulated wheat industry.

International speakers brought a perspective on changes that are happening globally. In the United Kingdom, the switch to domestic wheat supplies has presented key questions with respect to the understanding of the links between molecular markers and quality traits specific to local varieties and market needs. Highly-

respected Australian research groups contributed papers on beta glucans (reminders of the valuable legacy Bruce Stone has contributed to cereal science in Australia) and updates on starch and protein research results were also well represented.

The glycemic index, fructans, and folic acid were highlighted in the nutrition area.

The interest and geographical closeness of most of the research groups to both the subcontinent and all Asian countries ensured a strong interest in flat breads and other Asian cereal-based products. Researchers determining grain traits that are more suited to these markets, measuring the performance of the flours in manufacturing a wide range of breads and noodle products for export and domestic markets, presented their results.

The close scheduling and locations of both the 11th Wheat Genetics Symposium and the Genomics for Cereal Scientists Workshop encouraged some participants to attend multiple meetings, opening the door to new options for scientists in the Asian and subcontinent areas for future research collaborations. Next year's conference in Wagga will certainly be an opportunity for them to see and experience the agricultural end of the cereal supply chain.

No conference can claim to cover the new potential markets today without a session on biofuels and fodder crops. This year, a broad range of topics took attendees from wheat straw, sorghum and fermented canola, to Australian native grasses.

Students made up more than 15% of participants at the conference and this ensured an excellent poster program as well as



Conference attendees gathered during the poster program.

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Conference chair Robert Cracknell.

many networking opportunities for both the leaders of research groups with openings in their laboratories and graduate students planning their next career step.

A late afternoon informal discussion on work underway on bread analysis methods attracted a surprising number of attendees and a lively discussion indicating that hot topics of broad interest will always attract an audience.

The abstracts for all of the papers in the 58th conference will remain available on the conference webpage and the Proceedings are in preparation and will soon be available for sale.

No report on an Australian Cereal Chemistry Conference would be complete without mentioning the social activities. The exhibitors enjoyed unlimited interactions with the participants as all lunches and morning and afternoon breaks were scheduled among the exhibits. Moreover, the table top format ensured that everyone had a chance to present their products to the best advantage.

The 2008 Crackers Golf Tournament was another great outing, and what it lacked in numbers it certainly made up for in the quality of participants and networking opportunities. It offered a great opportunity for some of us to enjoy the warm air (very important for Southerners in winter months) and to take a short break from the organising activities. I can personally highly recommend this event to all future conference attendees.

Presentations and celebrations were saved for the final conference dinner when Dai Sutter (Westons) received the RACI Founders Award, Tony Blakeney (Cereal Solutions) received the RACI Megazyme Award, and Cassandra Black (DPI Vic) received the RACI Poster Award. As expected, everyone had a wonderful evening.

Thanks go to the 2008 AACC Intl. Downunder Section conference organising committee, the AACC Intl. headquarters staff for "urgent help" in setting up the website, and special thanks to conference chair Robert Cracknell, Rosemary Blakeney, and Malcolm Allen who kept the registration desk humming.

Anne Bridges received her academic training in Australia and Canada. She is chair of the AACC Intl. Approved Methods Technical Committee. She has participated in many international conferences and discussions regarding the importance of validated testing of agricultural biotechnology traits. Most recently she has been working with ILSI International on training programs and symposia in Brazil, Argentina, Columbia, Singapore, India, and China. She has worked in product development and quality in both health care and consumer food products for a number of companies including 3M and General Mills Inc. Bridges is now based in Australia and shares her time between consulting on food quality and safety, and agricultural biotechnology issues, method validation, and humanitarian relief work.



Photo courtesy of MarbleStreetStudio.com

Save the Date!

AACC International Milling and Baking Division Spring Technical Conference

May 13 – 15, 2009

Embassy Suites Hotel Albuquerque
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Don't miss out on this popular, annual technical conference for professionals in the milling and baking industry.

Preliminary Schedule

Wednesday, May 13

Golf Tournament – Location TBA

Thursday, May 14

8:00 a.m. Meeting Convenes
10:30 a.m. Refreshment Break
12:00 p.m. Luncheon with Program
1:30 p.m. Meeting Reconvenes
3:00 p.m. Refreshment Break
5:00 p.m. Adjourn / Reception
Dinner is on your own.

Friday, May 15

8:00 a.m. Meeting Convenes
10:30 a.m. Refreshment Break
12:00 p.m. Adjourn – End of Conference

Online registration and housing will open in February 2009.

www.aaccnet.org

Registration materials *will not* be mailed.

Questions?

Contact Dave Braun at dbraun@mennel.com.