

The WSU Food Engineering club's visit to Pacific Foods

The Food Engineering Club (FEC) at Washington State University (WSU) is a Registered Student Organization, initiated by a group of graduate food engineering students of Washington State University in 2010.

Article courtesy: Graduate students Chandrashekhar Sonar and Pavitra Krishna Kumar, with inputs from Dr. Shyam Sablani, FEC faculty advisor. Image courtesy: Graduate student Yoon-Ki Hong.

The FEC is comprised of 20 student members and one faculty advisor. Under the supervision of three core faculty members, these students conduct research in advanced thermal and non-thermal food technologies as well as polymeric packaging technologies to help the food industry address challenges of increasing consumer demand for safe, nutritious, and high-quality food products.

FEC visited Pacific Foods as a part of their March 2018 Professional Development activity. 11 graduate students, 2 visiting scholars from China and Brazil along with faculty Dr. Gustavo Barbosa-Cánovas participated in the activity. The participants got a chance to take a detailed tour of the manufacturing process, product development lab and waste recycling facility. Our guides explained the entire process in detail, such as production of chicken broth, extraction of soy milk, cooking of meals, Aseptic filling of product into cartons, final packaging and retorting.

During the visit to the R&D Lab, the team discussed various aspects to product development such as idea generation, process optimization, shelf life studies, sensory testing, and quality checks prior to marketing of products. It was exciting to learn about their sustainability



initiatives, involving maximum utilization of waste and subsequent revenue generation, containment of waste solids from rainwater and accidental spills from entering marshlands, and utilization of solar energy.

Pacific Foods turned out to be an ideal choice for all student participants since the company addresses several aspects of the students' research thesis, and gave them a new learning. The interaction session at the product development lab was a fun learning experience for the students, and it was delightful to meet another "Coug" family member, Terri Weaver, the Director of Product Development. On behalf of FEC and WSU, we thank Pacific Foods for agreeing to host us, for the insightful tour, and for giving us the opportunity. We are grateful in particular to Kara Winek and Kyle Boylan, for their presence, support and coordination throughout the visit, and also to Amanda Sellers for facilitating and scheduling this activity for us. We look forward to further collaboration and interaction with Pacific and its employees in the years to come. Meanwhile, if further interested to learn about FEC or to contact us, please visit: <http://studentinvolvement.orgsync.com/org/fec/home>

Thank you!