

Research in the Rendering Industry

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Issue

Research is the lifeblood of all industries, and the source of competitiveness and innovation for the country. Over the last two decades, the versatility of rendered byproducts has led to their increased use in many applications. Similarly, there have been numerous technological advances and regulatory changes in the last few years that directly impact the recycling of agricultural wastes into value added products. Many of these changes have forced reevaluation of how we deal with our spent animal populations, and have directed the approach and research goals among the rendering scientific community. A number of organizations are involved in the planning, coordination, and implementation of research in the rendering industry. Among them are:

The Fats and Proteins Research Foundation

The purpose of the Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF) is to provide an institution which will direct and manage a research process that results in an enhanced current usage and the development of new uses for rendered animal products. FPRF has carried out extensive evaluation and assessment studies for the renderers and animal feed industry since 1962. Historically, much of the research has been on using these products as animal feed, but new regulations will make non-feed uses a higher research priority.

Animal Co-Products Research and Education Center at Clemson University (ACREC) Located at the University of Clemson, South Carolina, ACREC seeks to advance the science and technology of animal co-products and the rendering process. In addition, the Center works to ensure microbial safety of rendered products for animal feeds and consumer protection, promotes environmentally sound practices, develops new market opportunities for the worldwide rendering industry and provides educational opportunities in animal co-product utilization. Current research projects at ACREC include chemical analysis of tallow, investigation of growth factors, and pesticides residues in by-product meals, odor remediation, and identification of bacteria isolated from rendering products. NRA and FPRF support this center.

USDA/ARS

The Fats, Oils and Animal Co-products research unit at ARS' Eastern Regional Research Center has both a solid framework of intellectual and facilities capacity for the needed research as well as a successful track record from its work on animal proteins such as hides, leather, gelatin, wool and dairy. NRA and FPRF support initiatives at this Center to develop non-feed applications for rendered proteins and to develop non-feed applications for wastewater and sludge, blood, offal, and feathers. This Center has been under funded in recent years, but is very important to the rendering industry, and in turn to agriculture and society.

Agriculture Research Funding Must be Strengthened

The Rendering Industry supports the proposal in the current farm bill calling for agricultural research funding to be doubled over the next 5 fiscal years, and this authorization should be retained in the 2007 Farm Bill with appropriations of funding strongly encouraged. An investment in animal research funding is needed to maintain America's competitiveness and ensure food security and safety with economic growth. It is worthy to note that the three organizational reform proposals (National Institute for Food and Agriculture [NIFA]) approach, the USDA farm bill proposal and the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges [NASULGC] CREATE-21 proposal) are unified in their call for enhanced public investment in nutrition, food and agricultural research, education and extension.

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