

## Food Processing & Technology now offered at SSCC

Southern State Community College announces the launch of a new associate of applied science (A.A.S.) degree program in Food Processing & Technology.

“Southern State developed this program in collaboration with several local companies who outlined a need for employees with academic training in the field of food processing and technology,” said Karen Davis, SSCC Interim Dean of Technical Studies. “During our initial needs assessment, we were surprised to learn of the vast opportunities for our graduates in this field. Our research ranked Ohio as fifth in the nation in overall food processing.”

Designed to be completed in four semesters, Food Processing & Technology is a diverse discipline which combines many different fields, including food science, safety, regulations, processing, chemistry and plant operations.

“With this degree in hand, our program graduates will be able to hit the ground running in a growing career which has a lot of offer, but not everyone knows about it,” said Liz Feliciano, SSCC instructor of food science.

Some job titles in this industry include food technician, quality control, food service supervisor, food inspector, food operations and food manufacturing supervisor. The exact nature of the profession is dictated by the area of specialization, but may encompass food plant operations, food product development, marketing, restaurant operations, government or regulatory functions, food inspection and food safety.

According to the most recent statistics offered by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “the 2010 median pay for Agriculture and Food Science Technicians (associate’s degree) was \$32,760 per year (\$15.75 per hour), and for Agriculture and Food Scientists (bachelor’s degree) was \$58,450 (\$28.10 per hour).”

Nationally, Ohio ranks first in Swiss cheese production, second in egg production and fruit and vegetable processing such as canning, juicing and specialty foods, third in fresh and processed tomatoes, bakery output, and beverage production of items like soft drinks, purified water, beer and wine, fourth in production of animal foods and dairy products, and fifth in the manufacturing of other food products such as teas, coffees, spices, seasonings, sauces, snacks, and peanut butter.

“In previous decades, to make food safe, we just heated it until everything was dead,” said Jen Perry, a postdoctoral researcher with The Ohio State University. “Now consumers are really demanding quality of their food, and they expect everything that they buy, whether it is completely raw or not, to be safe. Food science has job security because people eat every day and always will.”

Registration for spring semester is now underway and classes will begin Jan. 7, 2012.

To learn more about the new associate’s degree program offered at Southern State, please contact Feliciano at 1-800-628-7722, ext. 4695, or [lfeliciano@sscc.edu](mailto:lfeliciano@sscc.edu). For more information, please visit [www.sccc.edu/academics/associate/food-processing-technology](http://www.sccc.edu/academics/associate/food-processing-technology).

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