Background
One of the core competencies in the IFT Education standards is for students to achieve competency in communication skills (i.e., oral and written communication, listening, interviewing, etc.). According to the IFT guidelines, by the time students graduate, they should not only be able to search for and condense information, but also be able to "communicate technical information to a non-technical audience."

The Education Division of IFT is sponsoring a writing competition for undergraduate students to bring attention to and promote the development of communication skills. It has been shown that employees/entry level scientists who can communicate technical and non-technical concepts succinctly will be in a better position to achieve management status after entering the work force. Monetary prizes will be awarded to the authors of the top three papers. The winning entry will be published in the Journal of Food Science Education (JFSE) for dissemination to a world-wide audience.

Competition Guidelines

Topic: Any technical subject or latest development in the food science and technology field that may be important to the consumer. The article must be written in non-technical language such that someone reading your local newspaper could understand the article.

Eligibility: Undergraduate students who are majors in departments that have undergraduate or graduate programs in food science, nutrition, meat science, or dairy science, at any two or four-year college or university are eligible. Undergraduate students who will graduate in May or June, 2008 are also eligible.

Criteria: 800 words maximum. At least three technical or scientific references (which you used to write your article) should be cited in your submission. Reference citations should follow the Journal of Food Science format. References are not included in the 800 word maximum requirement.

Submission: Entries must be submitted by the end of the day of June 1, 2008. Written entries must be submitted via e-mail as a word document to Denise Skonberg at Denise.Skonberg@umit.maine.edu.

Judging: The criteria for judging are found on the attached sheet. Decisions of the judges are final. Winners will be announced at the annual IFT meeting in June, 2008. The winning entry will be published in the Fall issue of the Journal of Food Science Education.

Prizes: $500 First prize
$300 Second prize
$150 Third prize
Undergraduate Technical Writing Competition

Sponsored by: The Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Education Division

- Trans fats
- Genetically modified foods
- E. Coli detection
- Natural antioxidants

These are just a few of the many important challenges facing the food industry today.

Write an 800 word maximum paper about ANY technical subject or latest development in the food science and technology field that may be important to the consumer. The article must be written in non-technical language so that someone reading it in your local newspaper could understand. At least three technical or scientific references should be cited in your submission.

Prizes: $500 First prize
$300 Second prize
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The winning entry will be published in the fall issue of the Journal of Food Science Education!

Submissions & Eligibility: Entries must be submitted by the end of the day of June 1, 2008. Written entries must be submitted via e-mail as a word document to Denise Skonberg at Denise.Skonberg@umit.maine.edu. Undergraduate students who are majors in departments that have undergraduate or graduate programs in food science, nutrition, meat science, or dairy science, at any two or four-year college or university are eligible. Undergraduate students who will graduate in May or June, 2008 are also eligible. The criteria for judging are found on the attached sheet.
Undergraduate Technical Writing Competition:
Grading rubric for a non-technical article on a scientific subject

**Appropriateness of topic (10 points maximum)**
- Inadequate (0 points): Technical topic is not in field of food science and technology, and is unlikely to be of interest to consumers.
- Acceptable (5 points): Topic is either not in field of food science and technology, or is unlikely to be of interest to consumers.
- High Quality (10 points): Technical topic is in field of food science and technology, and is likely to be of interest to consumers.

**Writing (60 points maximum)**

*Organization*
- Inadequate (5 points): There appeared to be no organization of the article’s contents.
- Needs improvement (10 points): Organization of the topic is difficult to follow, due to inadequate transitions and/or rambling format.
- Acceptable (15 points): The article can be easily followed. Basic transitions are used and a structured format is followed.
- High quality (20 points): The main points in the article can be easily followed. Effective transitions are used and a structured format is followed.

*Communication style*
- Inadequate (5 points): The article is difficult to follow due to excessive scientific jargon. The technical material is vague and ambiguous.
- Needs improvement (10 points): Some scientific jargon is used. Technical material is somewhat confusing.
- Acceptable (15 points): Minimal scientific jargon. Technical material is mostly understandable. A creative element introduced to persuade reader.
- High quality (20 points): The article is written in a creative style without the use of scientific jargon. The importance of the topic is clearly conveyed to the lay reader. The technical material is explained in understandable and concise language.

*Mechanics and grammar*
- Inadequate (5 points): Sentences and paragraphs are difficult to read and understand due to poor grammar or mechanics.
- Needs improvement (10 points): The article contains numerous grammatical and mechanical errors.
- Acceptable (15 points): The article contains minimal grammatical and mechanical errors.
- High quality (20 points): The article contains no grammatical or mechanical errors.
Content (40 points maximum)

Correctness of facts
- Inadequate (5 points): Many “facts” are erroneous, misinterpreted, or misleading.
- Needs improvement (10 points): Some technical details and “facts” are incorrect.
- Acceptable (15 points): Technical details and “facts” are generally correct.
- High quality (20 points): All facts appear to be correct.

Completeness
- Inadequate (5 points): The article did not address some of the important points mentioned in the references the author selected. No reference citation.
- Needs improvement (10 points): Addressed some of the important points, but provided few details. Reference included but citations are incomplete.
- Acceptable (15 points): Addressed the main points, but left out some important details. Mostly complete reference citations.
- High quality (20 points): Addressed all the important points completely. Complete reference citation using format of the Journal of Food Science.