Oklahoma citizens know, first hand, the importance of helping each other in times of need, and Oklahoma companies understand that value, as well.

Hurricane Katrina left many in need, and several business clients of the Food & Agricultural Products Center, located on the Oklahoma State University campus in Stillwater, were there to answer their call.

Corey Stone, FAPC business planning and marketing specialist, said the most rewarding aspect of being a specialist at the FAPC is the opportunity to affect a client’s quality of life by helping them grow their business.

“It has been just as great an experience to see so many companies we work with step up to provide aid to the victims of Hurricane Katrina,” he said. “Oklahomans have always been among the first to contribute aid in times of crisis, and it is no surprise to see Oklahoma businesses react the same way.”

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma coordinated the efforts of businesses to aid in restoring the operations of the New Orleans Food Bank, which was inaccessible after the hurricane.

Among the businesses that the FAPC has assisted and provided goods and/or services were Chef’s Requested Foods of Oklahoma City, Refrigerated Delivery Service of Tulsa, Okla. and No Man’s Land Beef Jerky of Boise City, Okla.

In a news release from the Food Bank, Executive
In the last Food Facts, I spoke about a recent article in the Harvard Business Review on process standardization. Briefly, that article discussed the need to standardize the manufacturing process by describing every component of the process, including the process of employee hiring and training, the process of purchasing, as well as all the costs of raw materials and ingredients, utilities, administration, product development, marketing, selling, transportation, etc. The emphasis here is to standardize the process with the drive toward continuous improvement or outsourcing.

The Harvard Business Review article indicated that little effort has been applied to standardize processes and there are few standard process references. A particular business may not be ready to completely standardize the process for manufactured products in an effort to outsource them. But, a complete cost and capability analysis should be done in a spirit of continuous improvement and optimization of profitability.

Most food processors in Oklahoma have done a fine job of setting up manufacturing protocols and doing third-party audits. Is it possible that we need to take the next step and completely describe the entire process required to make our products, capture the cost of manufacturing and then pursue the opportunities that are uncovered?

The business manager can assess the need to trim costs, to outsource or to make other adjustments in the manufacturing process. After having completely described the process and having completely identified every cost, the business manager will also be in a better position to identify manufacturing and product standards for an outsourcing co-processor.

Food and agribusiness industries are very competitive and sound business management is needed for business growth and longevity. Make a decision to standardize your operation.

The FAPC has professional personnel and resources to assist you in doing a product-by-product review, to identify with you the cost structures, to evaluate and pursue process improvement opportunities, to identify your efficiency and your need areas, and subsequently ‘standardize’ your manufacturing processes, particularly for your core products. Contact us and let us assist you as you move toward greater profitability.

Dr. J. Roy Escoubas
FAPC Director

Two new members have been appointed to the Industry Advisory Committee of the FAPC.

David Howard, president of Unitherm Food Systems in Bristow, Okla., was appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma Senate, and John Williams, president of Chef’s Requested Foods in Oklahoma City, was appointed by the dean and director of Oklahoma State University’s Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

“We are pleased to have both Mr. Howard and Mr. Williams on our Industry Advisory Committee,” said J. Roy Escoubas, director of the FAPC. “The center will benefit from both individuals’ experience and leadership in the food industry.”

Howard’s company, Unitherm Food Systems, is a market leader in innovative technologies for pasteurization, cooking and chilling of raw, partially cooked and fully cooked food products and agricultural food commodities. Howard is dedicated to funding research for safer processing technologies and has helped shape the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service policy for food safety.

“I am proud to help out at the FAPC any way I can,” Howard said. “I hope to bring an innovative approach so it can grow and prosper.”

Williams entered the food industry while pursing a master’s degree in agricultural economics. After completion of the advanced degree, he launched his own food processing business, Chef’s Requested Foods.

Chef’s Requested Foods employs more than 200 Oklahoma residents. The company is a growth-driven, value-added meat processing company selling to the wholesale market throughout the continental United States. Some of the major clients include Wal-Mart, Albertson’s, Safeway, Kroger, US Food Service, Ben E. Keith and SYSCO.

NEW IAC MEMBERS, continued on page 4
The FAPC held its first Media Day, “Making Headlines: Media Meets FAPC 2005,” Tuesday, Sept. 27. Oklahoma radio and television stations, weekly and daily newspapers and county extension educators were invited to participate in the event.

“The event provided the participants with multiple story ideas about the FAPC,” said Mandy Gross, FAPC communications specialist and coordinator of the event.

Participants learned about the FAPC, interacted with Oklahoma businesses that have used FAPC services and heard key speakers discuss economic development and agritourism in Oklahoma. They also witnessed four demonstrations of projects performed at the FAPC, including meat processing, cleaning techniques, bread quality and wine quality.

Vince Orza, a former news anchor for KOCO-TV and the chief executive officer of Eateries, Inc., emceed the Media Day.

Tommy Kramer, economic development director for the City of Durant, discussed the importance of economic development for Oklahoma and how the FAPC is aiding in economic development in the state.

Also, Francie Tolle, director of the Oklahoma Agritourism Program, discussed the growing interest in agritourism in Oklahoma, including the state’s wineries. The FAPC provides assistance to several Oklahoma wineries.

Several FAPC clients had booths during the event and displayed their products for viewing or tasting. The companies present included: Granna’s Chili of Bessie, Okla., Abe’s Creations of Inola, Okla., Blessetti’s Gourmet Italian Pasta Sauce of Tulsa, Okla., Heartland Cup of Allen, Okla., and Eagle Chief Creek of Alva, Okla. The FAPC also displayed booths on certain projects, including food pathogen and wood products research and Nutraffin space muffin student project.

The FAPC would like to welcome Betty Rothermel as the new administrative assistant. Rothermel comes to the FAPC from the Department of Animal Science at Oklahoma State University, where she has worked for the past 20 years.

Before coming to OSU, Rothermel was employed at the First State Bank & Trust Co. in Guthrie, Okla. and the Oklahoma State Bank in Mulhall, Okla.

Rothermel graduated from Guthrie High School in 1965 and attended Hills Business University in Oklahoma City from 1965 to 1967.
KATRINA VICTIMS, continued from page 1

Director Rodney W. Bivens said, “We appreciate the generosity of these Oklahoma companies to donate equipment and staff to the relief efforts. The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma is committed to using any resources that we have to helping aid the affected areas.”

Chef’s Requested Foods donated a truck and driver, and along with a driver from Refrigerated Delivery Service, moved food items, cots and blankets to the devastated New Orleans area.

The owner of Chef’s Requested Foods, John Williams, is a newly appointed member of the FAPC Industry Advisory Committee.

“The FAPC has a very good relationship with Chef’s Requested Foods,” said Dave Moe, FAPC pilot plant manager. “We have assisted the company with several technical projects including shelf life and microbiological services.”

No Man’s Land Beef Jerky, in conjunction with the Oklahoma Beef Council, donated $10,000 worth of beef jerky to Hurricane Katrina victims.

The FAPC’s history with No Man’s Land goes back to more than 8 years, shortly after the FAPC opened, said Chuck Willoughby, FAPC business planning and marketing specialist.

“It is great to see how the company has grown from a restaurant selling jerky at the counter to a successful manufacturer and marketer of beef jerky,” he said. “It is wonderful that they are able to share that success with those in need.”

New IAC Members, continued from page 2

“My vision is to provide support to those initiatives that continue to provide economic growth to the state of Oklahoma through enrichment of our internal resources,” Williams said. “This includes all facets from the farm to the plate.”

As a member of the Industry Advisory Committee, Williams said he plans to continually ask the how, why, what and when of the economic impact that the FAPC activities will return to the Oklahoma economy and to the betterment of the producers, processors and residents.

The Oklahoma State Legislature established the FAPC Industry Advisory Committee in 1996 to serve in an advisory and oversight capacity for the FAPC. Each appointment to the committee is to represent a particular sector of the food and agricultural industries in Oklahoma.

The FAPC opened in January of 1997 in an effort to discover, develop and deliver technical aid and business information to enhance and support value-added food and agricultural product processing in the state of Oklahoma.