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Barbecue guru appointed to FAPC Industry Advisory Committee

By Mandy Gross, FAPC Communications Services Manager

STILLWATER, Okla. – A new member has been appointed to the Industry Advisory Committee of the Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center on the Oklahoma State University campus.

The Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives appointed Paul Schatte, general manager for Head Country Bar-B-Q in Ponca City, Okla., to the committee.

“We are pleased to have Mr. Schatte on our Industry Advisory Committee,” said J. Roy Escoubas, FAPC director. “The FAPC will benefit from his experience and leadership in the food industry.”

Schatte said he is excited to learn more about the FAPC and provide leadership and advise as part of the committee.

“Without a doubt, it’s an honor to be asked to serve in that capacity,” Schatte said. “I believe I can bring something to the table by serving on the committee, but I think Head Country can benefit as well.”

Being on the Industry Advisory Committee is not the only tie Schatte has to the FAPC. His son Josh has been a student worker at the FAPC for almost two years. Josh will graduate in December with a bachelor’s degree in rangeland ecology and will work at Red Rock Ranch after graduation.

Even though Josh decided not to follow in his dad’s footsteps with a career in the food industry, he said he enjoys working at the FAPC and has learned a lot about food processing.

“I enjoy talking to my dad about what is going on at the FAPC,” Josh said.

Schatte said he encouraged Josh to pick a career that he really enjoys.

“By working at the FAPC, Josh is broadening his education base and learning a variety of things he can take with him after graduation,” Schatte said. “The FAPC faculty and staff are dedicated to their jobs and take time to teach the students.”

Schatte has worked as general manager of Head Country for almost 9 years and is responsible for all manufacturing, marketing, and sales operations for the plant. Under his leadership, sales have almost tripled to about $6 million.
Even though the company is known for its No. 1 selling barbecue sauce in Oklahoma, it produces other products as well, including seasonings, salsa and marinade.

“We are all about barbecuing, but not just barbecuing,” Schatte said.

Head Country Bar-B-Q Sauce is sold in 100 percent of grocery stores in Oklahoma and has a presence in surrounding states. Now, the company is focusing on getting its products in Texas stores.

“If we can get 5 to 10 percent of the market in Texas, we will be doing really well because of the size of the state and the love of barbecue,” Schatte said.

Schatte graduated from Concordia Teachers College in Seward, Neb. While teaching at First Lutheran Elementary School in Ponca City, Schatte earned a master’s degree in education administration from OSU.

After teaching for nine years, Schatte accepted the leadership positions of principal and then superintendent of the First Lutheran School. He was principal for one year and superintendent for 10 years.

Schatte is actively involved in the First Lutheran Church and School in Ponca City, Okla. He has been a member of many organizations, including Leadership Ponca City, Focus of the Future Committee for the Oklahoma District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Ponca City United Way Board of Directors and 101 Rodeo Foundation Committee.

Schatte and his wife, Shelly, reside in Ponca City, Okla., and in addition to Josh, they have one other son Eric. Shelly is a fifth grade teacher at First Lutheran School. Eric is studying aviation at OSU.

For more information about the FAPC, call 405-744-6071 or visit www.fapc.biz.

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