

Agricultural Research Program



Agricultural researchers at N.C. A&T are developing a value-added meat substitute from peanut flour, thus promising myriad benefits to consumers, industries, and developing nations.

Meat substitute from N.C. A&T provides added value

GREENSBORO, N.C. – You may call this a nutty idea – but don't call it crazy.

The peanut flour meat substitute under development at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University makes a lot of sense to health-conscious consumers in the United States, as well as to people suffering from protein deficient diets in developing nations. The peanut industry here and abroad also stands to benefit from the value-added product.

Led by Dr. Mohammed Ahmedna, agricultural researchers at N.C. A&T have developed two low-fat, high-protein meat substitutes using the nutritious residue left over from peanut oil processing. One of these, a vegetarian product similar in taste and texture to ground beef, has received thumbs up in consumer taste testing, and won first place in the Institute of Food Technologists 2001 New Product Development Competition.

A second product combines defatted peanut flour with the high-protein byproduct left over from filleting tilapia and catfish. The result? A tasty fish nugget – and a new value-added product for the aquaculture industry. Taste testing on the nuggets is now under way, and the product has already been a finalist in an Institute of Food Technologists 2002 competition.

The project also has a food safety component, enabling agricultural research scientists to develop techniques for destroying the aflatoxins that can be harbored in peanut products.

N.C. A&T food scientists are collaborating with the Food Research Institute and peanut processors in Senegal to further develop and refine these processes. This West African nation joins North Carolina and the southeastern U.S. in taking a keen interest in the endeavor – one of the many value-added projects ongoing at the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at N.C. A&T.

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