

Elsenburg would remain an independent school of agriculture while the Faculty had to have a true university character, its technical instruction had to rest upon a thorough knowledge of the basic sciences and its spirit had to be one of research.

In May 1917 the College Council approved the appointment of three professors for the Faculty of Agriculture, which would be established the following year. Prof Al Perold was appointed as head of the Faculty and professor in Oenology, Prof JH Neethling was appointed as professor in Agricultural Botany and Prof JP du Buisson was appointed as professor in Agricultural Chemistry.

A huge task rested on the shoulders of these three professors! The departments that were established in 1918 were Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, Plant-breeding, Agricultural Chemistry, Veterinary Science, Entomology, Fruit-growing, Viniculture-Oenology and Plant Pathology.

### Humble beginnings

In the early years classes were held in rooms that were spread across the university grounds, even in the buildings on experimental farms and in private residences of lecturers. Only in June 1925 was the

Agriculture Building put into use. The Faculty grew so rapidly that an additional building had to be erected 25 years later. In 1952 the JS Marais Building was put into use by the Faculty.


Welgevallen on the banks of the Eersterivier was one of the first farms that were allocated in Stellenbosch (in 1689) and the Faculty of Agriculture had the benefit of beginning its activities with this farm as experimental farm. Later the Faculty also acquired the Mariendahl experimental farm, which borders on the Elsenburg experimental farm (approximately 14 km outside Stellenbosch).

In 1919, two years after the beginning of the courses in Agriculture, the first diplomas in Agriculture were awarded to five students. Mr BJ (Ben) de Klerk was the first student who obtained the BSc degree in Agriculture. He obtained it in 1920, only three years after the beginning of the academic activities of the Faculty, because he had already completed the required courses in the pure sciences in 1917. In the next year (1921) five students who had registered in 1918 received their BSc degrees in Agriculture, namely Messrs JG Bekker, AP de Wet, AM du Plessis, SJG Hofmeyr and JA van der Merwe.

### Cycles

Just like agriculture, the Faculty of Agriculture has also gone through many cycles in its 90-year existence. With the establishment of the Faculty in 1918 the Agriculture students comprised less than 4% of the total number of registered students at the University. By 1926 the percentage had increased by almost 18% and currently it is 5,75%.

Over a period of 90 years new departments have been established, some have been discontinued or amalgamated and even Forestry has travelled a road with and away from the Faculty of Agriculture. In 1932 the Faculty offered the four-year degree in Forestry for the first time but in 1956 the Department of Forestry became an independent faculty at the University. However, in 2000 Forestry again amalgamated with Agriculture and in 2005 the name of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry was changed to the Faculty of AgriSciences.

Over the past 90 years the more or less 15 000 graduates of the Faculty have played an important part in the agricultural industry of South Africa. Three alumni even became ministers, namely PO Sauer, PK le Roux and DC Uys. 



## FOOD SCIENCE DEVELOPS new products

Ever wondered who thought up chilli bites, sour worms or any of your favourite processed foods? Well, thanks to the Department of Food Science many exciting new processed food products are still awaiting the South African consumer.

The development of new products is the main business of food scientists and therefore the product development course presents great challenges to final-year Food Science students every year.

Prof Trevor Britz, who presents the course, is always impressed by the standard of the products developed by the students. He explained that during this course the students have to integrate all their undergraduate knowledge and systematically develop and produce exciting new products that fill a

gap in the South African market. The students work in groups and must develop a new type of product every semester.

During the most recent presentation West Coast Snoek Sticks carried off the South African Association for Food Science and Technology (SAAFST) prize for the best product. This snoek dried sausage was developed and produced by Louise Barnard, Amanda Brand, Robyn Eustice, Yvette Hanekom and Nicola Huisamen.

Visitors, especially those from the industry, were very impressed by this fish product and commented on the unique, pleasant fish flavour with smoky undertones. This product is a healthier alternative to the traditional dried sausage and biltong, it is a good source of protein and it is low in saturated fat.

Other products that attracted attention were Dolcé Pasta (fresh ravioli with a sweet filling and complementary sauce); Squirmie Wormies (fruit-flavoured jelly worms in a sticky syrup);

AmaGina (vinegar with a slightly sweet taste and characteristic pineapple flavour); and Garden Drops (soft jelly-like sweets made from carrot juice).

Last October one group developed Nutri Grillers. These are nutritious vegetable sausages in truly traditional South African flavours. This tasty, fat-free product is rich in antioxidants and is especially aimed at vegetarians. Nutri Grillers can be grilled and are convenient as afternoon snack or even party food. This product is the brainchild of Gwen Conradie, Anneke du Plessis, Gerida du Toit, Leandra Mostert and Anreza van der Merwe. They carried off the SAAFST prize for the best exhibition during the presentation. The prize was handed over by the SAAFST president, Rosemary Maguire.

- For information on further product development presentations, contact Ms Daleen du Preez at 021 808 3578 or visit the website <http://academic.sun.ac.za/foodsci/>