

# NutriCore NorthEast, Inc.

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The Second Annual Meeting of Stakeholders for the National Center of Excellence in Foods and Nutrition Research, a.k.a. NutriCore NorthEast, Inc. was held at the YCEDC on Thursday, December 9.

An agenda that featured presentations on Funding opportunities for businesses within The Ben Franklin Technology PARTners, a review of nutritional research projects underway at Penn State's University (PSU) Park campus, and a briefing from Capitol Hill, generated a level of attendance more than doubling the 16 stakeholders who participated in the initial meeting a year ago.

Darrell Auterson, President of YCEDC and NutriCore NorthEast, called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM and welcomed current and prospective sponsors with a brief overview of the YCEDC and its role in bringing the NutriCore initiative to this region.

Steve McGregor, Director of Research and Development, then provided a details on the organization, mission, and company investment programs of the Ben Franklin Technology PARTners.

Alan Cotich, NutriCore NorthEast's Project Coordinator, reviewed progress underway in the hub locations outside of PA towards the goal of funding nutrition research projects in their regions. A review of the initiative's sponsors and the expansion beyond food companies into engineering and architectural firms was highlighted. An update on the initiative's first sponsored project was then covered as researcher, Robert Roberts, Ph.D., was unavailable due to his teaching requirements at PSU. A successful public relations effort was reviewed as 9 articles, including a featured cover story in a national trade magazine, were published about funding and research activities at the Center of Excellence.

Robert B. Beelman, Ph.D. Professor of Food Science at PSU, then delivered a fascinating and informative report on mushrooms and the significant source of key nutritional components they represent. Dr. Beelman covered the commercialization potential of his findings and then presented a formal proposal for NutriCore to fund the continuation of his efforts in 2005.

Robert Reilly, Deputy Chief of Staff for US Congressman Todd Platts, wrapped up the formal agenda by announcing formal recognition of our Center of Excellence at two levels within the Fiscal Year 2005 Federal Budget signed by President Bush just the evening prior. First, through the efforts of Senators Specter and Santorum, an appropriation of \$50,000 to NutriCore NorthEast, Inc. is in the Agricultural Research budget. Second, within the "soft earmarks" of the USDA's Rural Development budget, our initiative has been recommended for "consideration" along with over 100 other programs around the country vying for part of a \$650,000 appropriation.

During the general Q&A session, invited guest George Klaus, the Southeast Area Director of USDA's Rural Development Program, addressed the attendees with his congratulations and offer to meet within a week to begin the process that can facilitate the process of turning the "soft ear mark" into a hard appropriation.

The meeting was adjourned by Darrell Auterson at 3:25 PM

Note: The next meeting of the Advisory Committee is scheduled for January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at Hershey Foods' Technical Center at 3PM. Among the agenda items will be an update in person from Dr. Roberts and welcome of new members, and review of the federal funding programs just announced for our Center of Excellence.

