

Contact: Mandy Gross | FAPC Communications | 405-744-0442 | [mandy.gross@okstate.edu](mailto:mandy.gross@okstate.edu)

## **Head Country helps FAPC add value to Oklahoma**

By Stacy Patton, FAPC Communications Graduate Assistant

**(Sept. 10, 2009 Stillwater, Okla.)** – For more than a decade, the Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center on the Oklahoma State University campus has been serving the food and fiber industries of Oklahoma by providing many services, including product development, laboratory and technical assistance and educational workshops.

Since 2003, the FAPC Foundation Focus Program has enabled the center to accomplish its objectives with increased financial support from private donors, said Chuck Willoughby, FAPC business and marketing relations manager.

“With these funds, the FAPC is able to focus on delivering even greater economic impact to Oklahoma as it continues to serve the state’s value-added agricultural industry,” Willoughby said.

In support of the FAPC Foundation Focus Program and activities of the center’s pilot plant facilities, Danny and Carey Head and Paul Schatte, owners of Head Country Food Products Inc., in Ponca City, Okla., provided an automated filling line, valued at approximately \$86,000, as a gift-in-kind.

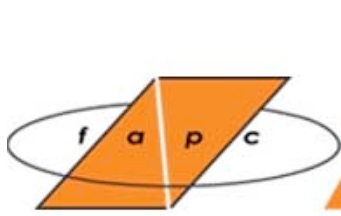
“We have been very blessed in the food industry over the past 61 years,” said Schatte, an OSU alumnus and FAPC Industry Advisory Committee member. “The people of Oklahoma, as well as Oklahoma State University, have been instrumental in our success.”

Schatte has worked as general manager of Head Country for 10 years and is responsible for all manufacturing, marketing and sales operations for the plant. 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.

Schatte said it is a common occurrence to be asked by up-and-coming individuals about what it takes to get into the food business. Head Country provides them with as much information as it can and encourages them to utilize the FAPC and the on-site training available through the center.

“When we upgraded our filling equipment, we could not think of a better place to donate our unused equipment than to FAPC,” Schatte said. “This way, those individuals we direct to the center can get even more hands-on training and knowledge of what it takes to get into the food business.”

FAPC’s pilot plant facilities are designed with the needs of the Oklahoma food and agricultural products processing industry in mind. Some of the services offered by the pilot plant include training and demonstration, process system development and evaluation, new product development, equipment evaluation, evaluation of functional product ingredients, technology transfer, thermal process evaluation and consumer market testing.



The automated filling unit is capable of filling fluid products such as salad dressing and barbecue sauce, eight bottles at a time, said David Moe, FAPC pilot plant manager.

“The added efficiency this automated unit provides can allow us to produce test market and market entry batches for our entrepreneur companies in larger quantities in less time,” Moe said. “Many of FAPC’s entrepreneurial clients take advantage of scale-up and test market production opportunities offered through the pilot plant operations.”

The Product Innovation Fund, which is set up through the OSU Foundation, has received nearly \$500,000 in contributions from the Oklahoma value-added industry and from private individuals.

Roy Escoubas, FAPC director, said he is thankful to Head Country and the many other donors who have donated to help support the mission and vision of the center.

“Because of the support, the FAPC has been able to better assist more than 1,000 Oklahoma businesses through 3,000 technical and business projects,” Escoubas said. “An economic impact study found the combined direct, indirect and induced economic contributions of FAPC client companies were \$6.3 billion and generated 52,000 jobs.”

To learn more about the Product Innovation Fund and how to add value to Oklahoma, visit [www.fapc.biz/fund/](http://www.fapc.biz/fund/), or contact Willoughby by calling at 405-744-6071 or by e-mailing [chuck.willoughby@okstate.edu](mailto:chuck.willoughby@okstate.edu).

###

Oklahoma State University is a modern land-grant system that cuts across disciplines to better prepare students for a new world. Oklahoma’s only university with a statewide presence, OSU improves the lives of people in Oklahoma, the nation, and the world through integrated, high-quality teaching, research and outreach. OSU has more than 32,000 students across its five-campus system and more than 19,000 on its Stillwater campus; with students from all 50 states and about 110 nations. Established in 1890, OSU has graduated more than 200,000 students who have made a lasting impact on Oklahoma and the world. CREATE - INNOVATE - EDUCATE - GO STATE!