

APPLIED FOOD SOLUTIONS

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A RECENT SUCCESS

AFS presented on three topics at the Thermal Processing course at Ohio State in April 2019. We have provided unique process solutions and a potential disrupter development is “in the works.”

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ENTER THE DISRUPTER

The Thermal Processing of RTE Meats Course mentioned in my last newsletter (2/11/19) ended up with a near record 48 attendees representing the meat and poultry industry and allied producers for the meat and poultry industry. All told, 24 different organizations were represented. The unusually high attendance was probably related to an upcoming regulatory disrupter for the meat and poultry industry. The regulatory disrupter dominated the presentations and discussions, although a potential new industry disrupter also showed up somewhat unexpectedly.

So, what is an industry disrupter? According to Caroline Howard of Forbes Magazine “People are sometimes confused about the difference between innovation and disruption. It's not exactly black and white, but there are real distinctions, and it's not just splitting hairs. Think of it this way: Disruptors are innovators, but not all innovators are disruptors -- in the same way that a square is a rectangle but not all rectangles are squares. Still with me?” Caroline focuses on people, but where does that leave regulatory change, culture change, etc.? I like a more inclusive definition with more about the resulting change in the industry or organization.

Back to the Thermal Processing course. A new potential disrupter was a small part of my fundamentals of continuous process discussion. That same potential disrupter (microwave) was the subject of a presentation by Peter J. Taormina, Ph.D. (President of Etna Consulting Group). Peter did not actually present the microwave as a disrupter, but Peter presented a microwave process validation for cooking bacon. Peter's presentation focus was exactly as I would expect for this course.

The microwave as a disrupter showed up after hours when I explained process research, I completed in the 1990's, utilizing an industrial microwave. During that work we discovered that a microwave could efficiently and effectively replace a significant portion of the energy transferred during a cooking process. This was not a positive result for my employer at the time, who manufactured ovens. Hence the "let's move on for now" response the research work received in the 1990's.

Would You Like to Know More?

There are current and future disrupters working in/on the meat and poultry industry involving Continuous Improvement (CI), business process improvement, and change management. These will be covered in a Process Control course at Ohio State University in July:

<https://meatsci.osu.edu/events/introduction-process-control-meat-and-poultry-processors>.

What is your definition of an industry disrupter? Do you know of any current disrupters and/or future disrupters? I welcome your feedback and thoughts on this topic.