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Facing East

The next McRib?

Department's \$7,000 grant pays for roast pork project

By Lana Welsh
Staff Reporter

A \$7,000 grant has helped UNL's animal science department move from beef to pork research.

The grant, from the National Pork Producers Council, helps pay for a current pork project, called "Restructuring Roast Pork for Institutional Food Service."

Roger Mandigo, professor of animal science, said this project is another step in learning about restructuring meat products.

"All the work until now has been with steaks," he said. McDonald's McRib is an example of a restructured product already on the market, he said, and many other patty, steak or nugget products also are available.

The current project applies restructuring to pork roasts, he said. Restruc-

turing is "using naturally occurring meat proteins to help bind various pieces of meat into a solid object," Mandigo said. Only salt is added to the product, because it changes the protein so it will bind the meat.

Restructured meat is convenient for institutions, restaurants and businesses that serve many meals, he said. When serving large numbers of meals, proportions must be carefully controlled, he said.

"Something as innocent as half an ounce becomes significant over a period of time," he said. Extra portions add up to extra dollars these businesses can't afford to spend.

With restructuring, portions can be controlled because shape and size are exact. Businesses can be certain each portion is equal, he said.

Institutions use many roast type products, he said. If the roasts work

successfully in the institutional market, he said, then they could be added to the retail market.

"It is much easier to go into the institutional market," Mandigo said. Retail businesses are concerned with many factors that institutions aren't, such as packaging, labels, recipes and marketing, he said.

Restructured products are already sold at restaurants and grocery stores and are on many institutional menus, he said. Although the McRib gained national attention, the military probably is the largest consumer of restructured products, Mandigo said.

The same advantages that exist for businesses make the products appealing to consumers. Restructured meat products are fast, convenient and in pre-controlled proportions, he said.

"Everybody's in such a big hurry," Mandigo said.

Peace Corps representatives seek UNL agriculture majors

By Lauri Hoppie
Campus Editor

Representatives of the Peace Corps now at UNL say they're here looking for agriculture students.

Michael Kammerdiener, one of the two corps representatives at UNL until Friday, said the corps needs people from all backgrounds. But because of worsening conditions in many African countries, the corps needs more agriculture specialists than usual.

The Peace Corps is a federal volunteer agency that aims to help in the development of foreign countries. Volunteers receive a monthly living allowance upon completion of two years of overseas work.

Kammerdiener said the Peace Corps

began the drive to find more agriculture workers about two months ago, when the director announced the African Food Systems Initiative.

The initiative is designed to keep about 12 African countries from suffering the kind of famine that has taken over Ethiopia, he said. These countries today are at the stage that Ethiopia was a few years ago, he said.

The initiative would begin a 10-year program to increase agricultural workers in those countries by 50 percent, he said.

Representative Roy Baughman said the Peace Corps recruiting drive also has been influenced by foreign countries' changing needs. More countries need specialists, such as soil scientists and crop extensionists, Baughman said.

Kammerdiener said the Peace Corps also is looking for people in "scarce skill areas," such as math, science, elementary education, special education, skill trades, engineering and people with French and Spanish backgrounds.

Since the African initiative was announced, more than 13,000 people have responded, Kammerdiener said.

UNL's response has not been as great.

Baughman said that as of Monday, four agriculture students had signed up for interviews. There are interview openings all day Thursday for agriculture students in Agriculture Hall 103 on East Campus.

Interviews on City Campus are Thursday and Friday at the Career Planning and Placement Office, Nebraska Union 230. Openings still are available.

Last year, between 30 and 35 UNL students applied, Kammerdiener said. Among the six major universities in the Midwest's four-state area, that number "is right in the middle," he said.

The area includes Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas and Iowa.

Nationally, about 15,000 people applied last year, Kammerdiener said. Of these, the Peace Corps chose 3,000.

"It is competitive," Baughman said.

Baughman and Kammerdiener will show a film about the corps, "The Toughest Job You'll Ever Love" today at 4:30 at the East Union at Nebraska Union 225.

Robot...

Continued from Page 1

The biggest obstacle is mobility, Sullivan said. For example, robotic tractors would have to be able to compensate for things like ground irregularities, equipment malfunctions and any objects blocking the way of the machine.

Using robots in grain elevators, which tend to be dusty and dangerous, also would be unwise, Sullivan said. Robots, like any other electrical device, create static electricity that could ignite grain dust to explode, he said.

In October 1983, a sheep-shearing robot was developed and used. The robot was much slower than a human sheep-shearer, but continued shearing long after the man was exhausted, Sullivan said.

Sullivan said robotics has "a lot of potential" for uses in agricultural and every day household applications. But the technology for developing these kind of machines is just beginning to be explored.

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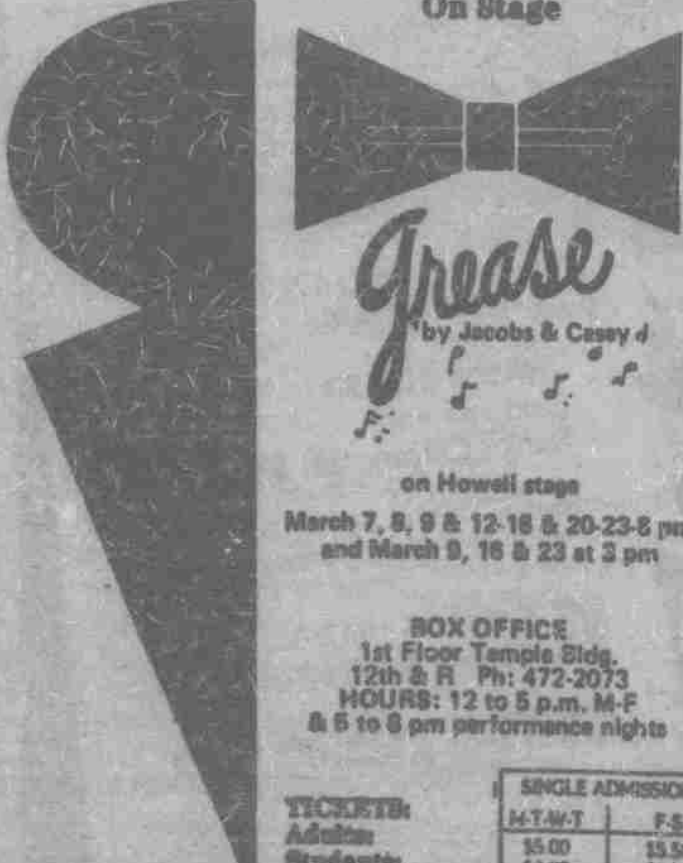


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