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## Professors receive grant to study E. coli

GRANT from page 1

or in the environment," Benson said. "Once you identify them, then you can design rational ways of eliminating the organism."

E. coli contamination was responsible last August for the largest beef recall in U.S. history. A Columbus meat processing plant owned by Hudson Foods recalled 25 million pounds of its beef.

Benson said E. coli research has increased with the recent emergence of pathogens such as O157:H7 - the strain responsible for the recall - and because of media attention sparked by recent contamination across the country.

Both a high profile in the media and political pressure have pushed E. coli research into the spotlight, he

said.

Dennis Burson, associate professor of animal science at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said most of the attention has stemmed from people eating contaminated beef.

Drinking unpasteurized apple juice, eating tainted vegetables and individual contact - such as swimming in a pool contaminated with feces - are other ways it is contracted.

"Because of the seriousness of the organism, (E. coli) has received a lot of attention and emphasis," Burson said.

The bacteria causes about 20,000 infections and 250 deaths each year, according to a July article in Time magazine.

E. coli can wreak havoc on the human system, causing bloody diarrhea, kidney failure, abdominal cramps, fever and nausea.

Burson said researchers in the last 10 years have made significant advances, such as the complete publication of the DNA sequence of a lab E. coli strain.

Although researchers are learning more and more about the deadly bacteria, Burson said everyone needs to be aware of it.

"Food safety needs to be everybody's concern," Burson said. "The beef producers, the food processors, the food service people and people that cook at home.

"Our systems have gotten better and better ... but it doesn't mean that it is 100 percent at this point."

## Orientations welcome minority students

By KIM SWEET  
Staff writer

As students of color who are freshmen or transfer students arrive on campus for the first time, they will be bombarded with new classes, the opportunity to participate in clubs and the transition to college life.

But Jimmi Smith, director of Multicultural Affairs, hopes the students will take a moment out of their busy schedules to attend a minority-

student orientation over the next few weeks.

The orientations fill various functions, Smith said, the biggest being the opportunity for Multicultural Affairs to make contact with the new students.

Another purpose is to put students in contact with other student organizations that provide students of the same background with support.

Faculty members will be at orientations, and Smith hopes their presence will assure students that a broad network is available to support and help them as they begin college.

Smith said research shows students who aren't actively involved in school and on campus in the first six weeks of classes have a greater chance of dropping out.

"Students of color are shy about formulating a relationship," Smith said.

With the orientations, Multicultural Affairs is hoping to help deepen the relationships

"Students of color are shy about formulating a relationship."

JIMMI SMITH

Multicultural Affairs Director

between the students and faculty members, as well as campus groups aimed at students of color.

The orientations for various groups will take place on the following dates at the Culture Center.

■ Aug. 30: Native American student welcome.

■ Sept. 8: Afrikan People's Union welcome.

■ Sept. 10: Asian-American student welcome.

■ Sept. 13: Latino-American student kickoff.

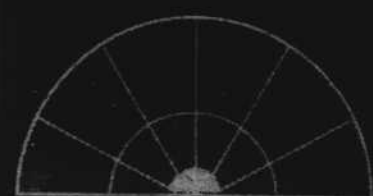
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