

## Get The Scoop On Ice Cream Business With Penn State Short Course

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — What are the hot trends in cold treats? High-concept flavoring and low fat, according to the director of the nation's premier program on ice cream making and sales.

Penn State's Ice Cream Short Course enters its 107th year as the nation's oldest, best-known and

largest educational program in the science and technology of ice cream under the direction of Robert F. Roberts, associate professor of food science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

Running Jan. 4-14 at the Nittany Lion Inn on Penn State's University Park campus, the program instructs professionals in all

aspects of commercial ice cream manufacture, including ingredients and flavors, freezing/hardening, and storage/distribution.

Roberts says the current industry trend is toward "highly flavored concoctions. "Vanilla is still the primary flavor that people want," he said. "But you see more and more fancifully flavored prod-

ucts, such as 'Tin Roof Sundae' or 'Cookies and Cream', with very high levels of background flavors and identifiable pieces. You may find specialty products with gummi bears or caramel critters stirred in, for instance."

At the other end of the spectrum is the growing popularity of low-fat frozen desserts, Roberts said,

as technological advances allow producers to create low-fat (and no-fat) ice creams and frozen yogurts with more of the rich taste and creamy consistency consumers crave.

"We've improved our command of flavor systems and our ability to emulsify and whip no-fat products to make a dessert that is acceptable," Roberts said. "You may remember what a no-fat vanilla ice cream tasted like about 10 years ago. Now you can buy products that are quite good."

Roberts said he is excited about heading up a program that draws an international audience. Registrants this year will represent at least 26 states and nine countries. He says the course offers something for everyone interested in the "magic" of ice cream, "from cow to cone."

"What a student takes away from the course depends on what they start with," he says. "The 'mom-and-pop' operator who wants to open a shop will learn a lot about the industrial aspect — how products are put together and their functional properties. People in production may come away with a greater understanding of why their efforts result in a good or poor finished product. People in research and development will come away with new ideas on how ingredients interact with each other to form the product."

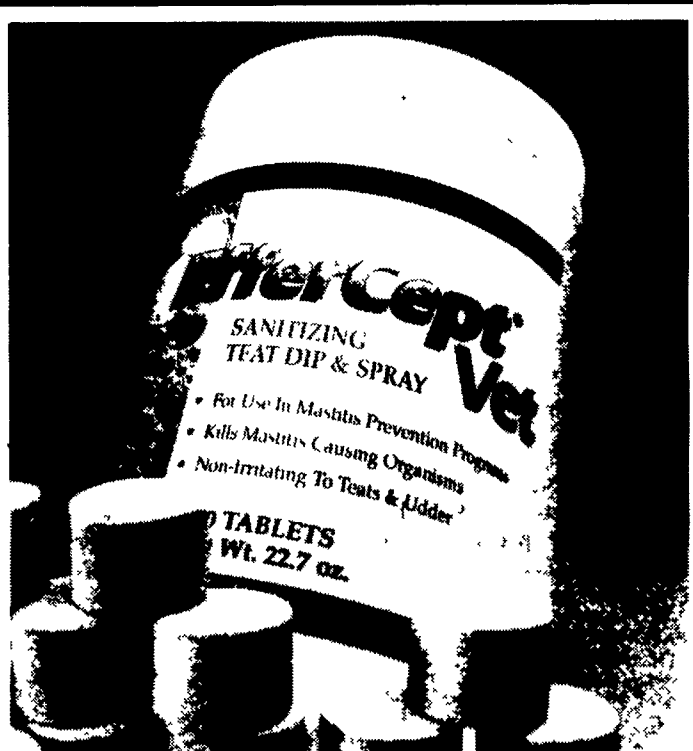
As an alternative to the more intensive and highly technical short course, Penn State offers the seminar, "Successful Ice Cream Retailing," Jan. 15-18 at the Nittany Lion Inn. Conducted by Ed Marks, a consultant with more than 50 years of experience in the ice cream industry, the seminar is intended for those who want to own an ice cream parlor, rather than in ice cream factory.

"This seminar was started to meet the needs of the 'mom-and-pop' store owners, rather than the food scientists," Marks said. "The short course is technology-heavy, slanted toward research and development and quality assurance."

The seminar will address such concerns as employee training, menu creation, price setting, and promotions. Presenters will include Dick Warren, owner-operator of Four Seas Ice Cream in Cape Cod, Mass.; Diane and Steve Lueders, a husband-and-wife team with more than 20 years of experience in specialty ice cream desserts; and Andy Crivaro, soft-serve consultant and co-owner of Sentry Equip-

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