

People & Places

Researcher seeks new markets for crops

Girish Ganjyal’s laboratory at WSU explores ways to add value

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

PULLMAN, Wash. — Girish Ganjyal stands by as his team of graduate students tests materials in hopes of building a better puffed cereal.

As Ganjyal watches, Ryan Kowalski compares corn, wheat and tapioca starches, pushing samples through an extruder, which heats them under pressure so they come out puffed in a long strand. Students Bon-Jae Gu slices the strand to make samples and Sravya Kallu bags them for testing.

Ganjyal’s work in the value-added processing laboratory at Washington State University seeks to increase the nutritional value of the puffs, but still maintain their taste and texture.

The project is one of many the laboratory undertakes to find new markets for crops Washington farmers grow and to help processors perfect their products.

Other research projects include:

- Increasing soft white wheat uses in tortillas and cereals.
- New uses for pea and lentil starches and proteins.
- New uses for quinoa, a popular gluten-free crop.
- Reducing splits and cracks in cherries during packing.
- A new drying process for apple packing.
- Making candies from leftover cherry materials.

The lab indirectly helps farmers by creating more markets for their crops, Ganjyal said. For example, sprouted wheat isn’t good for bread. The dough, instead of being elastic, becomes viscous. But it could be used for tortillas or in powder used to make energy drinks, Ganjyal said.

Another project looks at the waste from fruit juice process-



Girish Ganjyal, assistant professor and extension food processing specialist, points to a research poster outlining some of the work his food processing laboratory is doing on the Washington State University campus in Pullman, Wash.



Washington State University Ph.D. student Ryan Kowalski feeds starch into an extruder in WSU’s food processing laboratory, while master’s degree student and research assistant Sravya Kallu prepares to obtain a sample for testing as Ph.D. student Bon-Jae Gu cuts it March 17.

ing. The lab is studying different pomaces, which can improve the juice by adding fiber and improving the taste.

The laboratory also provides technical assistance to processors.

Colleen Lamb-Gunnerson, owner of Dungeness River Lamb Farm and Lamb Farm Kitchen in Sequim, Wash., said Ganjyal’s laboratory evaluated 16 fruit preserve products for her company.

The lab has helped significantly, Lamb-Gunnerson said, as the products can be sold as “shelf stable” in a variety of markets, including the Internet.

“We have confidence, from Dr. Ganjyal, that our products will remain safe food products,” she said.

Susana Rios, production assistant at Chukar Cherry Co. in Prosser, Wash., said Ganjyal has helped identify and correct the causes of failed batches of its foods, and improving flavor profiles and texture.

“Girish’s lab has helped us not only know what to do, but why we need to do so,” Rios said.

The researchers also hope to modify pea proteins naturally to increase their solubility for use in energy drinks. The proteins

Western Innovator Girish Ganjyal

Occupation: Assistant professor and extension food processing specialist, Washington State University

Age: 38

Hometown: Hubli, India

Current location: Pullman, Wash.

Education: Ph.D. in food processing from University of Nebraska-Lincoln, MBA from Benedictine College in Atchison, Kan.,

Family: Wife Uju, son Sahil, 7

Website: <http://foodprocessing.wsu.edu/>



could also be used in gluten-free noodles or cakes.

“That’s adding value to the existing crops,” Ganjyal said. “That gives them a whole different market.”

“Girish’s work is of significant value to the agricultural processing industry,” said Robert McDaniel, director of community and economic development for WSU Extension. “He is highly sought after as a problem-solver, applied researcher and trainer.”

As consumer demands change, the industry must combine nutritional value with food ingredient functions, such as using healthful pea starch as a thickening agent for soups, Ganjyal said.

The lab has an annual budget of \$300,000 to \$500,000, Ganjyal said. Funding comes from commodity organizations, the National Science Foundation, USDA, the Economic Development Authority and WSU. Individual companies contribute as well.

In the long term, Ganjyal hopes to explore byproducts that are currently without existing uses. Some are ever-present, but others such as sprouted wheat only happen once in a while.

“But if you find a use for it, don’t you all of a sudden have a market?” Ganjyal said. “One farmer stood up (during a meeting) and said, ‘You know what, if you find a use for it, I’m going to go irrigate my wheat.’”

Cowboy Logic goes visual, but not yet viral

By RYAN M. TAYLOR
For the Capital Press

TOWNER, N.D. — There’s a lot of crossover between work and pleasure here on the ranch, and that’s a good thing. We have horses on the place for work, but they’re also a pleasure to use. Others might say the same thing about their four-wheeled ATV, or a nice shop where they service tractors for the farm and tinker with old cars for fun.

Life is good when the things you use to make a living also help you have a life. When I bought my last iPad, I knew it was another tool with a lot of crossover potential.

Work and non-work

I bought a little keyboard for it and I’ve typed a bunch

Cowboy Logic
Ryan Taylor



of columns out on it while I’ve traveled. I suppose I could have written those columns at home before hitting the road but there’s no excitement in having them done so far ahead of my deadline. Best to leave them to the last minute, pound them out on that miniature screen and zap them to the editors via cellular phone signaled email just under the wire.

Plenty of non-work is logged onto the iPad, too. I do a lot of reading on it, some books but mostly newspapers. The kids have watched a movie or two on it, and our little girl discovered how much she likes YouTube

music videos, especially from a couple of young ladies named Lennon and Maisy.

They were young enough to directly relate to my daughter. Maisy was 6 years old in one of the first videos she found. It had over 2 million views. When they sang “Call Your Girlfriend,” complete with claps and cups, they got 27 million views. From there, they ended up on a television series and the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, where they sang “Ho Hey” and got 8 million views.

Passive cash

Before the songs play on YouTube, there’s a quick advertisement, which gave me an idea. Maybe I could make a little extra money with my iPad and its integrated video camera. I could do it myself, no film crew

needed with the “selfie” video option and my iPad balanced atop a fencepost or the pickup dashboard out in the pasture. Cowboy Logic could hit the YouTube, and rake in some advertising dollars to buy the children new shoes for school.

Granted, it’s a crowded field. Every minute (yes, minute), 300 hours (yes, hours) of video is uploaded to YouTube. They have more than a billion users logging billions of views each day, and half of those views are on mobile devices. No wonder tractors need auto-steer technology so fields can stay straight while tech-savvy farmers watch mobile YouTube videos.

Viewers needed

They even have videos for us up-and-coming YouTube “creators” on how to “monetize” our

content in the YouTube “ecosystem.” It’s the one place where going “viral” is positive. I’d cry if my cattle herd went viral, but it’s aerial fist pumps if my video goes viral.

Most of the videos on my YouTube channel are minute-and-a-half-long pieces I’ve done for a show called Ag-Week TV. Go ahead, search out “Ryan Taylor Cowboy Logic” and give them a click. My last upload has 127 views so it’s going to take a while to reach Lennon and Maisy status, and the associated ad monetization.

In the meantime, I’m going to step away from the screen, get outside and make sure my cattle don’t go viral. Looks like the calf check is going to outperform my YouTube channel this year, and I’m just fine with that.

Anders Benjamin Christensen, retired farmer, dies at 102

Anders Benjamin Christensen, a retired farmer and a charter member and 58-year director of the Linn Soil and Water Conservation District, died June 25, 2015, in Albany, Ore. He was 102.

Known by his friends and family as Ben, he was born June 9, 1913, in Rowland, Ore. He was the oldest of four children born to Katharine and Anders C. Christensen.

He graduated from Harrisburg High School in 1932 and worked with his father and brother on their farm until 1935,



Anders Benjamin Christensen

when he purchased a neighboring farm.

He married Rose Darling on Oct. 26, 1935. They had three sons, Anders Clifford, Cecil and Hubert.

In his younger years he helped build Garp Road east of Harrisburg using horses and a Fresno scraper. He also helped build and maintain telephone lines in the area when phone service became available.

He also helped survey and clear rights-of-way for Consumers Power in the area.

He farmed until 1961 and ran a tree-planting crew in the winters. Ben was a charter member of the Linn Soil and Water Conservation District. He not only ran equipment for the district building ditches, dikes and leveling fields, he served as a director for 58 years. He was treasurer for the State Conservation District for 45 years.

After retiring from farming, Ben worked for Lochmead Farms and Dairy for 30 years.

He joined the Harrisburg Fire Department in 1941-42. He helped serve the Fourth of July breakfast every year until he was 99. He also assisted with the fireworks displays.

He enjoyed deep sea fishing and hunting. For his 100th birthday, Ben traveled with family to Alaska and fished at Seward.

Ben was a member of the IOOF Lodge for 70 years, he was also a member of the Charity Grange for 64 years.

He is preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Rose; brother Leonard Christensen; and sisters

Blake Enos and Elsie “Chris” Bryant.

He leaves behind sons Clifford of Terrebonne, Ore., Cecil of Eugene, Ore., Hubert (Carolyn) of Harrisburg, Ore., four grandchildren, six stepgrandchildren and numerous great-, great-great- and great-great-great-grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held at 2 p.m. July 25 at the Harrisburg Area Museum.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Harrisburg Fire Rescue, Samaritan Evergreen Hospice and the Harrisburg Area Museum.

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Index

California 7
Dairy 11
Idaho 10
Livestock 11
Markets 15
Opinion 6
Oregon 8
Washington 9

Correction policy

Accuracy is important to Capital Press staff and to our readers.

If you see a misstatement, omission or factual error in a headline, story or photo caption, please call the Capital Press news department at 503-364-4431, or send email to newsroom@capitalpress.com.

We want to publish corrections to set the record straight.

Calendar

Saturday, July 18

Washington State Sheep Producers Ram & Ewe Sale, 11:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Grant County Fairgrounds, Moses Lake, Wash.

Wednesday-Saturday, July 22-25

Hood River County Fair, noon-10 p.m. Hood River County Fairgrounds, Hood River, Ore.

Friday, July 24

UCCE Rice Production Workshop, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. The Refuge Restaurant, Yuba City, Calif. 530-538-7201.

Wednesday, July 29

North Willamette Research & Extension Center Community Open House, 4-7 p.m. North Willamette Research & Extension Center, Aurora, Ore.

Sunday, Aug. 2

“Rise Up Country” Music Festival, 1-5 p.m. Antelope Church lawn, Antelope, Ore. 541-395-2507. Kicks off at 1 p.m. with Joni Harms, Oregon’s award winning singer-songwriter, followed by a Chuckwagon Barbecue and the harmonies of the Mud Springs Gospel Band. Headlining the festival will be Susie McEntire, a multi-award winning entertainer.

Tuesday, Aug. 4

Spotted Wing Drosophila Workshop, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Eugene Unitarian Universalist Church, Eugene, Ore. 208-850-6504. Topics include understanding SWD biology, behavior and seasonal needs; management tools and practices; monitoring, identification and fruit sampling demonstrations.

Saturday-Sunday, Aug. 15-16

Harvest Fest, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Yamhill Valley Heritage Center Museum, McMinnville, Ore. 503-434-0490. Tractor parade, threshing, binding and baling oats using antique farming equipment and horses. Pioneer kids area, agricultural displays, music, food and fun.