

A Look Back at DPTC History



A dramatic shift in funding of dairy research had its genesis in the establishment of National Dairy Promotion and Research Board through 1983 Congressional act. The national board took a major step in fashioning a revitalized dairy foods research program by establishing the national dairy centers.

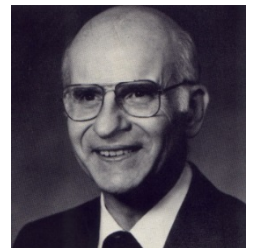
The states dairy industry hatched the idea that the center for research, development, and outreach at Cal Poly was needed in order to support the

states growing dairy industry and to help train future generations of dairy industry leaders.

Lark Carter, Dean of Agriculture at the time and then Department Head, Gene Starkey spent a lot of time going to Sacramento and meeting with dairy industry people along with legislators to get acceptance of the idea and to get funding. "Phil (Tong) had the dream. He was the one who had the vision and our job was perceived to be to get the roadblocks out of the way so that he could fulfill his dream," according to Carter.

"People like Louie Calcagno who was the chair of the National Dairy Board at the time worked with us to help make sure we put in the proposal the right way and we were selected as one of the six." explained Tong.

According to Dr. O'Donnell, "It was a nice match of UC Davis and Cal Poly. Tom Richardson and Phil Tong put together a strong proposal that married the capabilities of UC Davis and Cal Poly." They were awarded a \$2.5 million, five year grant to Cal Poly and U.C. Davis.



Former Dean of
Agriculture: Lark Carter



Former Dairy Science
Department Head
Gene Starkey



Norm Olson, Professor
Emeritus, University of
Wisconsin

Norm Olson, Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin explained it this way, "The evolution of the centers had several positive effects. With the advent of real funding, scientists from other disciplines such as engineering, nutrition and economics became interested in participating in center research programs. This also applied to cooperation between centers especially after each center established their program and then sought enhance and complement their research with researchers in other centers. The increased stature and output from centers also raised awareness in the academic community that dairy research was a viable area and one that they might participate in and contribute to."

About this same time Ralph Watts was CEO of CMAB and a strong proponent of research. As he increased the CMAB's commitment to research, he knew he would need help managing it. He created the California Dairy Research Foundation (CDRF) and asked Dr. Joe O'Donnell to run it. CDRF managed the research funds to make sure project ideas were evaluated fairly and objectively and to increase accountability of funded projects. Dr. O'Donnell explained, "The communication link was the really critical part between the industry and universities. They speak different languages and have different objectives." It was his job to help keep communication clear between the two.



Former CDRF Executive
Director Joe O'Donnell

California Dairy Research Foundation (CDRF) has been very supportive of the DPTC Industry Outreach program over the years. According to current CDRF Executive Director, Dr. Gonca Pasin, "their science based educational programs are doing a great job. The attendees gain valuable information that they can immediately apply to better do their specific job assignments. The producers benefit by knowing that a better educated workforce leads to improved quality and value during handling and processing their milk." She went on to state that she fully endorses the programs put on by the DPTC and CDRF will continue to support these programs in the future.

Lark Carter declared, "it really developed into something far beyond what any of us at that time could have imagined and I am so proud of him (Tong) and to have been a little part of making it successful."

