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Cornell Hosts Better Process Control School

By Joe Ogrodnick

GENEVA, NY: Cornell University will host a Better Process Control School (BPCS) May 8–11 at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, N.Y. BPCS helps food processors comply with FDA and USDA regulations.

"This school is designed for companies who manufacture shelf-stable foods in sealed containers such as cans, jars, cups, bowls, and flexible pouches," said Olga Padilla-Zakour, associate professor of food processing in the Department of Food Science and Technology at the Experiment Station. "The regulations specify that any processing of low-acid foods (such as vegetables, meats, and dairy products) or acidified (pickled) foods must be supervised by a person who has attended and successfully completed the BPCS."

In order to better tailor the instruction, the school is divided into two parts. The first part is a two-day program for processors who manufacture pickled foods, which include most small processors and a few large companies. The second part is a four-day course for manufacturers of canned and aseptically produced foods. The latter tend to be larger processors with high-volume production because of the size and complexity of the equipment needed.

"The school is quite intensive because we cover 16 chapters of material along with the corresponding examinations in just four days," Padilla-Zakour said. "The lecturers are knowledgeable and experienced individuals who do a great job of teaching a wide variety of topics—from microbiology to container closure evaluation. An FDA representative, Cornell professors, and industry experts will be teaching to a group of 70 students."

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