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Sub-Saharan Region Flour Millers Learn about U.S. Wheat

Participants learned about U.S. wheat production, storage and harvest at the IGP Institute.

MANHATTAN, Kansas – As Americans continue to stay plugged into the trade conflict it is more important now than ever to build great trade relations with those who are already importing our commodities. The U.S. Wheat Associates sponsored millers from Nigeria and South Africa for a training on flour milling that was held from June 18-29, 2018 at the IGP Institute Conference Center.

Ten participants representing various milling positions such as quality control manager, quality assurance analyst, production manager, and mill manager attended the training. These participants gained knowledge through lectures and hands-on training exercises led by K-State faculty and staff.

“We have been working through the entire milling process really highlighting a lot over the last couple weeks about the benefits of blending U.S. wheats, primarily hard winter wheats, with lower quality wheat to improve finished flour quality and functionality,” says Shawn Thiele, flour milling and grain processing curriculum manager.

The topics covered in this course included wheat classes; wheat structure; end use functionalities; U.S. wheat grading standards; storage and quality management; U.S. grain production and marketing system; principles of wheat cleaning and conditioning; milling math including blending; wheat and flour blending; flour and dough testing; flour functionality; understanding quality of finished baked food using blended flours, overview of the milling systems, flow sheets design, function, fluting tables and nomenclature; starch damage; using cumulative attribute curves for blending and quality control; and managing the process and impact of wheat quality.

Along with lectures and hands-on exercises in the Hal Ross Flour Mill and Shellenberger Hall Baking Lab, the course participants toured the Kansas Wheat Innovation Center; Farmer Direct Foods; Cargill; Kejr farms; the USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service; General Mills, Inc.; Boulevard Brewing Company; and the USDA Agriculture Research Service.

One of the participants who felt compelled by the training was Pieter Lombard, head miller, at Pioneer Foods says, “I have realized again how important it is to be a miller, how much stuff we can do to improve our mills and to put a good quality product out. It is interesting because sometimes you get caught up in just doing the work and keeping the mill running.” He emphasized that when he returns to the mills he will be conducting new testing because of this training.

In addition to flour milling and grain processing, the IGP Institute offers courses in the areas of grain marketing and risk management and feed manufacturing. To learn more about these other training opportunities, visit the IGP Institute website at www.ksu.edu/igp.

*Story by: Tarra Rotstein
Communications Intern
tarra1@ksu.edu*

*For more information contact: Lisa Moser
IGP Marketing and Communications Coordinator
785-477-4837; lmoser@ksu.edu*

