

Preface

I was destined to be a food scientist at birth, the son of a food scientist and home economist. My dad completed his Ph.D. at Oregon State when I was a toddler. My mom prepared balanced and nutritious meals for me through my sophomore year at Clemson University when my mom and dad moved away on me. I made up my mind I was going to get a Ph.D. when I was in fourth grade. I thought about majoring in Chemistry when I went to college only to become a confirmed food scientist when I had my first course under Dr. Jack Mitchell. All three of my degrees are in Food Science, and I could not have chosen a better field of study.

This book grew out of my frustrations as a graduate student at the Universities of Florida and Massachusetts. After spending 4 years, mostly as an officer in the US Navy, between my undergraduate years and graduate school, I was ready to continue my education. I viewed graduate school as an extension of my undergraduate studies, but I soon discovered there were qualitative differences between the two. All my professors expected my classmates and me to know the differences, but no one was interested in trying to explain what they were. We all had to learn about those differences on our own. We formed a cadre of students to provide mutual support at Florida. Out of those frustrations I have made a lifetime study of what it takes to be successful in a Food Science graduate program and what it means to be a food scientist.

I started developing the concepts for this book about 35 years ago and have built on them ever since. I have used these ideas in teaching a graduate course, FDST 8110—*Food Research and the Scientific Method*, and an undergraduate course, FDST 4200—*Food Science Forum*. The latter is designed to serve as a bridge from an undergraduate degree and either the food industry or graduate school. I hope that the book will serve as a reservoir of ideas for those beginning a graduate education in food science or beginning a professional career in the field. Although at times it may read as a how-to manual for success in graduate school, it is meant to challenge the reader to study the process, to challenge conventional wisdom, and to develop a career path that maximizes the probability of success both in school and beyond. I have had the opportunity to view food science through the lenses of programs at four universities and service in numerous activities with the Institute of Food

Technologists. This book is thus focused on the field of Food Science, but it may have relevance to other scientific disciplines.

The book would not be possible without the help of all those classmates, professors, students, and colleagues who contributed ideas, comments, and criticisms either during my career or in reading early versions of selected chapters. I refrain from mentioning those as the list would be far too long. The best part of being a professor is the interaction with students as they keep you young, challenge your suppositions, and teach you as much as you can teach them.

Becoming a Food Scientist

To Graduate School and Beyond

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2012, XI, 168 p. 49 illus., 22 illus. in color., Softcover

ISBN: 978-1-4614-3298-2