

## Taking It From Lab To Table

A MULTI-disciplinary field in the study of food to improve and transform substances into safe and quality products for consumers, the food science industry has prominent potential for expansion as food is a necessity.

Offered by Tunku Abdul Rahman University College's (TAR UC) Faculty of Applied Sciences (FOAS), the food science programme exposes students to areas in functional foods and trains them in advanced laboratory skills and current techniques in food science towards professionalism. Graduates would develop a range of skills that would not only enable them to thrive in food-related industries in production, managerial and consultancy roles but also as entrepreneurs to develop new food-related products.

According to final year Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Food Science student Ang Kim Joo, an aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic is the general population coming to realise the impact of good dietary practices on physical health.

"I believe there is plenty of room for growth in the food industry to develop new products catering to today's consumer demands, which is expected to accelerate with the present digital transformation in the manufacturing process," she shared.

Ang also shared that at TAR UC, she was encouraged to think out of the box where everything was possible. Ang and two other students in the food science programme were given the opportunity to work with FOAS' industry partner, Nestlin Malaysia Sdn Bhd, in developing a green process to produce bioactive sialylated glycopeptides and its derivatives from bird's nest.

Initially planning to venture into culinary arts as a career, Tan Jia Ling was convinced by a friend to study food science instead because of her passion for food production, especially fermented foods.

Jia Ling, who is currently interning at Nestlin Malaysia and involved in the company's ongoing research project with TAR UC, also applies her knowledge in food science to improve the quality of food she makes for consumption.

“The importance of food science will slowly but surely be emphasised by food-related industries as consumers now pay more attention to choosing the best ingredients and processing method. In line with that, industry players have to determine how to conserve the most beneficial properties of food and remove the less preferred attributes,” Jia Ling added.

Also given the opportunity to work on industrial projects is Tan Sze Jack, a lecturer at TAR UC's Centre for Pre-University Studies (CPUS), who is pursuing his Doctor of Philosophy (Food Science) at TAR UC. An industry research collaboration on enzyme hydrolysis of edible bird's nest and developing a quality marker to monitor the process of enzyme hydrolysis in pilot scale piqued his interest, being in line with his ambition to develop and commercialise food products that not only fulfil basic human needs but have enhanced nutritional value and are convenient to consume.

“TAR UC has plenty of engagements and connections with various industries and always encourages students to explore opportunities that can prepare them to tackle any challenges they might face as they enter the workforce,” he shared. FOAS currently offers food science programmes at diploma, bachelor's degree and postgraduate levels. Find out more about TAR UC's food science or applied science programmes at [www.tarc.edu.my/foas/](http://www.tarc.edu.my/foas/).



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