

## **BENEFITS OF ATTENDING TO THE AACC CONFERENCE**

I am Renuka Waduge and doing my Ph. D. degree in the Department of Food Science in the University of Guelph. I study the architectural development of wheat starch during the kernel growth, for my Ph. D. research project. Wheat is a well-known cereal consumed by human beings worldwide. Therefore, studying the architecture of starch granule will benefit to the food industry to understand the functionality of starch in the food product.

American Association of Cereal Chemists (AACC) is an international association specialized in the area of cereals. This year they had their annual meeting in Baltimore, Maryland during the period of September 13-17<sup>th</sup>. I attended to this conference and presented a poster under the topic of 'use of iodine vapor as a marker to study wheat starch granule architecture during maturity'. It was a great opportunity to present a poster at this conference since it is specialized in the area which I am working and interested in. A number of attendees paid interest in my research work and I also got the opportunity to get some new ideas from some professors who work in the field.

Over 2000 professionals, from all over the world and are experts in the area, were attended to this conference. Therefore, it was a great opportunity for me to meet these professionals and network with them. The most important thing was the opportunity to meet with authors of some research papers that I am interested in my study and use their methods to study my samples. I was able to clarify a problem I had in one of the methods I used (Relative crystallinity calculation) and was struggling for a long time. It further allowed me to establish a good network with professionals around the world which certainly will benefit my research and my future career. I also got the opportunity to attend to some oral presentations which was in the area of chemistry and technology of cereals, at the conference. It was useful very much for me to gain

some updated knowledge about starch granule structure and their properties, and also new analytical tools to study the starch granule structure/architecture.

There were more than 150 exhibits at the conference displaying up to date analytical equipments, new technologies and industrial applications of cereals. This exhibition was also a great opportunity to gain knowledge about new analytical techniques and contact with analytical Lab suppliers.

As I mentioned above, I gained number of benefits by attending to the AACCC Conference. I really appreciate your support by compensating some of my expenses because it was a great motivation for me to participate in this successful meeting.