**FAFS Dean’s Office Updates**

**Issue no.11 | April 2019**

*FAFS Dean’s Office Updates is the monthly newsletter that keeps FAFS faculty, students, staff, and friends informed of the latest activities, initiatives, and achievements of the FAFS family. Please share your department’s news and your suggestions with fas.deanupdates@aub.edu.lb*

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In the spotlight

**FAFS recognizing Dr. Raja I. Tannous’ contribution to bridging science and food industry**

An Open Forum took place April 11, at FAFS: *The Lebanese Agro-Food Industry and Universities: A Love-Hate Relationship*. The event was dedicated to the memory of Dr. Raja I. Tannous, an inspiring figure in the FAFS heritage, Dr. Tannous was the founding chairperson of NFSC and twice served as interim dean. His rich and groundbreaking contributions to the worlds of research, academia, and industry, along with being one of the original supporters of bridging university and industry relationships, are the guiding concepts behind the open forum. The event concluded with an announcement of the initiation of the Dr. Raja I. Tannous Endowed Lectureship in celebration of Dr. Tannous’ contributions and support to his Alma Mater and the Agro-food Industry. [READ MORE](#)

**Google grant awarded to a team of FAFS and other AUB professors**

FAFS would like to congratulate professors Hadi Jaafar (Agriculture, FAFS), Samer Kharroubi (Nutrition, FAFS), Fatima Abu Salem (Computer Science, FAS) and Mazen Saghir (Electrical and Computer Engineering, MSFEA) for receiving a highly competitive $1,000,000 Google's AI Impact Challenge grant for their project proposal in the field of smart irrigation. [READ MORE](#)

**AUB hosts World Water Council President Loïc Fauchon**

President Khuri and Dean Mohtar, recently elected to the World Water Council (WWC) Board of Governors, hosted WWC president Loïc Fauchon and discussed future collaborations between the Council and AUB. Discussion topics included the support of WWC in water training and capacity building for water practitioners and executives, in addition to topics of integrated Water Resource Management as relates to the WEFRAH vision, and WWC’s funding of the participation of three Lebanese youth at the World Water Forum in Dakar in 2021. Dean Mohtar and alternate governor Mutaseem Fadel attended the 68th Board of Governors (BoG) meeting of the World Water Council (WWC) in Beirut’s Le Royal Hotel, Dbayeh (April 9-10). [READ MORE](#)
WEFRAH Updates
The inaugural cohort of WEFRAH researchers and their clusters/projects were approved for funding, provided by the Office of the Provost, Executive Vice President (EVP) for Medicine and Global Strategy, and the deans. The cohort included professors from all different AUB faculties, staff from IT and Physical Plant Department (PPD), as well as researchers from the private and public sectors. READ MORE

CLIMAT continues to support rural communities
As part of its CLIMAT project, ESDU-FAFS is proceeding with work in its demo-plots. CLIMAT training sessions on topics including freekeh cultivation and processing, dairy production, food safety and sustainable agriculture, and more are delivered to Lebanese and Syrian refugees in Northeast Baalbeck and Western Bekaa.

Events

FAFS – AUB planting the seeds of hope
FAFS, in collaboration with the Nature Conservation Center (NCC), the Office of Development, and the Communication Office, initiated (April 7) its first AUB One Day Planting the Seeds of Hope in Dhour Al Abadieh, Mount Lebanon. READ MORE

AUB High School Fair 2019: High School students visit FAFS
The Annual AUB fair 2019 for Junior (Second Secondary/Grade 11/Baccalaureate 1ère) High School students, coming from 82 high schools all over Lebanon, took place this year from April 1 until April 17. About 4,500 prospective students visited our interactive stand near the FAFS entrance door. Two assigned representatives from different departments or programs were available to provide Lebanese high schools students with brochures and proper information on the FAFS academic undergraduate programs. In addition, students enjoyed the Q&A activity, winning ecofriendly prizes. This could not have been possible without the effective support of FAFS graduate fellows and ushers.
**AUBees keep AUB buzzing green!**
The Apiculture class of the Department of Agriculture organized **AUB Honey Day: Spring 2019** – declared **National Bee Day** (April 17). Held in the FAFS courtyard, the day engaged participants in many activities including a display of observation hives, bees and beekeeping trivia games, an environmental awareness campaign, beekeeping related items, honey, honey tasting, and homemade honey pastries.

[READ MORE](#)

**Spring Big Games 2019**
The 2019 AUB Annual Football Game (Big Game) took place at the Greenfield, April 17. The Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture team competed against the United Faculties team (consisting of students from the Faculties of Medicine, Arts and Sciences, Agricultural and Food Sciences, Health Sciences, and the Olayan School of Business). At the end of the game, the United Faculties team won and received the trophy from the President.

[READ MORE](#)

**Easter Souk aal Souk**
Souk aal Souk continues to offer local producers opportunities to enhance their livelihoods. ESDU-FAFS collaborated (April 18) with the AUB Neighborhood Initiative and Food Heritage Foundation, organizing the Easter Souk aal Souk Farmers’ Market in Jeanne D’arc, Hamra Street.

[READ MORE](#)

**AREC News**

**Food-Water-Energy-Health Nexus**
With the goal of improving water use efficiency, AREC initiated, in summer 2007, a project to integrate aquaculture and agriculture to improve water use efficiency. Over time, the project developed integrated aquaculture and greenhouse vegetable production. Recently, AREC introduced a solar photovoltaic system, converting the entire operation to the use of renewable energy.

[READ MORE](#)
Cocoon Workshop
As part of the project *Testing of the cocoon technology in Lebanon*, a collaboration between Land Life Company, MENAQUA land restoration, and AUB’s Nature Conservation Center, a demonstration workshop took place at AREC on April 8. [READ MORE]

Donation of Village Kit
The global firm, ND Traffic Consulting, generously donated the ‘Village Kit’ to AREC. The Village Kit, a solar room, will become a model for promoting green energy in the Beqaa plain to help provide solutions for farmers suffering from an unreliable energy supply network. Additionally, it can become a future training & research opportunity for students and faculty. [READ MORE]

Faculty News

Dr. Farah Naja’s interview on Mediterranean Diet with Télé Liban
In a TV interview, Dr. Naja described the Mediterranean dietary pattern and underscored its benefits not only on human health but also on the environment. She discussed with her host the findings of a recent study by her research group, showing a gradual erosion of the Mediterranean diet in Lebanon and highlighted opportunities for intervention at the policy and public health levels. [READ MORE]

Alumni and Students News

FAFS “Plastig” team wins at IBDAA 2019
International Biodiversity Day At AUB (IBDAA), April 12, named the JTB Bank IBDAA, is now in its thirteenth year of offering innovative takes on education, developed over the past decade in cooperation with the Nature Conservation Center (AUB-NCC). This year’s theme was Rethinking Plastic. The FAFS team of Francis Khoury, Sami Fadel and Mohamad El Chaar won second prize in the business category for their startup concept “Plastig”: a manufacturing company to produce 100% biodegradable, starch-based plastics. [READ MORE]
FAFS PhD student Carla Al Mallah receives CICCIPIO award to Scotland

FAFS congratulates Carla El Mallah, recipient of the Nutrition Graduate Student Travel Award, 2019. Also known as the Joseph and Ilham Cicippio Endowed Research Fund (CICCIPIO), the award supports a Nutrition graduate student’s travel to professional meetings or events for the purpose of reporting their research outcomes and scholarly activities. READ MORE

NFSC students journey into the working world prior to becoming world-class dietitians

The NFSC course 298I: Dietetic Practicum, is a six month, supervised training experience at an AUB affiliated medical facility. The experience includes all areas of dietetic practice: clinical, food service, and community settings. Students receive orientation sessions to assist in their transition from the academic to the hospital setting. READ MORE

LDEM student Tara Kanj shortlisted for 2019 World Landscape Architecture (WLA) Award

LDEM proudly announces that final year student Tara Kanj is shortlisted for the World Landscape Architecture (WLA) Award 2019, in recognition of her final year project: Ouzai Coastal Slums. Kanj studied the shore of Ouzai, a coastal strip south of Beirut, Lebanon. The space is abundant with haphazardly built concrete homes, piling garbage, sewage leaks, lack of fresh water, and extreme maritime pollution. The implications of climate change are catching up to the area and becoming a major component of residents’ lives. READ MORE

Faculty Research

The emergence of anti-microbial resistance: A major problem at the intersection of food production, safety and public health by Issmat Kassem

The emergence of antibiotic resistance has been dubbed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the major public health concern to humanity this century. The use of antibiotics for human and animal health and for producing food has resulted in over-reliance on antibiotics in both human medicine and agricultural practices. Lebanon lacks a national system to observe antimicrobial resistance and the status of resistance trends in the country is largely unknown. Dr. Issmat Kassem has conducted extensive research in Lebanon and abroad, central to intersecting between safety, public health, and medicine on the issue of anti-microbial resistance. READ MORE
Characterizing the governance and organization of agro-food supply chains in Lebanon by Gumataw Abebe

Specific supply chain governance and organization is paramount to control unfavorable climatic conditions for food handling, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions. Maintaining constant quality and safety as a product moves from one stage to the next within the supply chain is critical. In Lebanon, studies analyzing how different agro-food supply chains, in individual crops, are governed (coordinated and regulated), and the extent of supply chain integration are scant. Dr. Gumataw Abebe addresses this topic. READ MORE

EuropeAid - SWaM Akkar. Supporting Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Jurd al-Kaytee by Maria Gabriella Trovato

Landscape has the power to inspire, captivate, and mobilize people. While the developing concept of landscape may be difficult to grasp, in some parts of the world the idea of landscape is in a more advanced state than in Lebanon. Dr. Maria Gabriella Trovato believes that the EuropeAid research project she is currently working on, SWaM Akkar: Supporting Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Jurd al-Kaytee, Akkar, provides a concrete approach to demonstrate the importance and validity of landscape as a tool in the planning process of Lebanese territories. The SWaM Akkar project focuses on planning and management of solid waste in North Lebanon. READ MORE

Announcements

SAVE THE DATE
FAFS Reception for the Graduating Class of 2019
Date: Monday, May 27, 2019
Time: 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Location: Charles Hostler Student Center – Auditorium

RSVP: Monday, May 16, 2019 to fafs@aub.edu.lb

Awards and certificates of outstanding achievements will be distributed during the event, to be followed by Ramadan iftar. READ MORE
SAVE THE DATE

Waterlution
Water Innovation Lab – Lebanon

What: the largest water innovation event of the Arab World, dedicated to developing the next generation of water leaders!
When: June 8 – 10, 2019, Field Tours from Beirut to Bekaa Valley
June 10 – 14, 2019, Intensive Training in Leadership, Systems-Thinking, and Developing Co-Innovation Projects
Who: Community leaders, students, and young professionals between the ages of 18 and 30, interested in solving urban, rural, and industrial water challenges in Lebanon.

Waterlution website

SAVE THE DATE

WEFRAH Design Thinking Workshop
Date: June 2019
Location: AREC

WEFRAH’s goal is to build AUB’s capacity in multidisciplinary, system-of-systems research that addresses the grand challenge of human security in relation to water, energy, food, and health. In this regard, a Design Thinking Workshop will be organized with an aim to refine the scope and the research questions of the projects and clusters submitted for the WEFRAH internal seed funding. It will improve the interdisciplinarity among faculty members, create out-of-the-box solutions for current projects and clusters, and foster the creation of a WEFRAH community that will help transcend these projects into grand challenges. The workshop will be moderated by Trustee Fadi Ghandour, Founder of Ruwwad.

SAVE THE DATE

Launch of the IFPRI Global Food Policy Report 2019
Date: June 18, 2019
Time: 10:30 am - 1:00 pm
Location: Michel and Sherine Bayoud Lecture Hall, FAFS

IFPRI’s 2019 Global Food Policy Report reviews the major food policy issues, developments, and decisions of 2018, and highlights challenges and opportunities for 2019 at the global and country levels. The eighth annual report highlights the urgency of rural revitalization to combat poverty and food insecurity that are prominent in MENA’s rural areas.

SAVE THE DATE

Lectures series and Seminars

April 18 – Water wars or water cooperation? This is the question | FAFS – Léna Salamé, Lawyer, specialist in conflict management. READ MORE

April 15-20 – The Role of Inflammation in Health – and How We Can Regulate Inflammatory Responses with Lifestyle Choices; Preventing Cancer – What do we know? What can we do? What are the things we need to think about as we plan the research agenda?; The Dietary Inflammatory Index DII® Story and Past, Current and Future Use of the DII in Research | FAFS – Dr. James Hebert, URB Scholar, Health
April 15 – **Launch of the EAT-Lancet commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems: Food in the Anthropocene | FAFS** – Panelists: Louise Sarant, moderator and journalist, Nature Journal MENA; Mahmoud El Solh, former general director of ICARDA, Lebanon; Roula Majdalani, Director of the ESCWA Sustainable Development Policies Division at UN-ESCWA; Mario Massoud, CEO of Biomass Lebanon; Nahla Hwalla, Professor, NFSC, FAFS; James Hebert, distinguished Professor in the area of Epidemiology, Director of the USC’s Cancer Prevention and Control Program at the University of South Carolina; Hasan Aljaajaa, Co-Founder of the Arab Network for Food Sovereignty (APN). READ MORE

April 10 – **Water Challenges and Opportunities: Lebanon, the Region, and the role of youth | FAFS** – Keynote speaker: Loïc Fauchon, President of the World Water Council (WWC) and the Société des Eaux de Marseille S.A. READ MORE

April 8 – **Implementing the Sendai Framework in the Arab States | FAFS** – Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction. READ MORE

April 3 – **Encapsulation Technologies - Applications in Foods and Agricultural Systems | FAFS** – Dr. Jamileh Lakkis, Lead Consultant for the startup company, Bellacap, Spain. READ MORE

April 1 – **Forestscaping: How to Bring Back Our Lost Forests in Cities | FAFS** – Shubhendu Sharma, Founder and Director, Afforestt. READ MORE

March 4-5 – **Integrating time series ET mapping into an operational irrigation management framework | Fifth Arab Water Week, Jordan** – Hadi Jaafar, Assistant Professor, Agriculture, FAFS. READ MORE

**To learn more about FAFS events, please visit our website [Calendar](#)**

To advertise your upcoming events, please send the event details *(title, location, date, brief description, picture, and contact name & email)* to [fafs_com@aub.edu.lb](mailto:fafs_com@aub.edu.lb)

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