

Dr. Bhimu Patil

Inaugural University Professor and Interim Head, Department of Food Science & Technology
Director, Vegetable and Fruit Improvement Center
Director, USDA National Center of Excellence
Texas A&M University

Dr. Patil's research focuses on the broader impacts of fruits and vegetables on human health. His work also examines the effects of harvesting and post-harvesting practices on fruit and vegetable quality. Dr. Patil's contribution, in establishing the concept 'Foods for Health,' is integrating the methods involved in production of fruits and vegetables, from plant breeding, agronomic practices, harvesting methods, distribution and sales, health benefits, quality, food safety, to (finally) consumption. For example, while most people might have a slice of melon as a healthy snack, Dr. Patil has identified and characterized the health-promoting compounds in melon, organized work to breed varieties with more of these compounds, tested that these varieties have consumer-preferred attributes (taste, texture), made sure the varieties have key agronomic traits (disease resistance and high yield), explored how storage and processing of melon affect health-promoting compounds, organized and obtained funding for a USDA National Center of Excellence to make sure the melons does not carry food-borne illness, improved the agricultural economics for farmers growing these watermelons, initiated a campaign to encourage consumers to eat fresh melon, and organized an international symposium to help scientists around the world share their discoveries related to Foods for Health, including melons. Moreover, Dr. Patil's research encompasses many fruits and vegetables (from citrus to kale). His concept, that the parts of the agricultural system for production of fruits and vegetables must be integrated with the goal of producing Foods for Health, has made a transformational contribution to the food system in the U.S.

He has secured \$17.5 million for his research and educational programs, published 207 peer-reviewed articles, and been invited to present at 48 international meetings during which he has given 24 keynote/plenary talks, and at 98 national and 51 regional meetings. The research and educational outreach programs led by Dr. Patil at the Vegetable and Fruit Improvement Center have received substantial attention and Dr. Patil has been interviewed and/or his work has been published in 135 articles from various news media including the Associated Press, Reuters, the Wall Street Journal, and Fox Health Channel. He has been an invited speaker, including keynote and plenary speaker, for his scientific research and educational excellence by several countries including Australia, Brazil, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Israel, India, New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, UAE, and different states in the USA.

He has received numerous awards and honors. Five professional societies (American Chemical Society, American Society for Horticultural Sciences, Brazilian Horticulture Society, Indian Horticulture Society, TAMU AgriLife recognized Patil as a **Fellow**, a title bestowed on those who have made exceptional contributions to research and academia.

He has developed three multi-disciplinary and multi-state courses ("Science of Foods for Health", "Phytochemicals in Fruits and Vegetables to Improve Human Health", "The Nexus of Food & Nutritional Security, Hunger and Sustainability") with support from three USDA-Challenge grants.