Research Development Fund – Fall FY16 Cover Page Template
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: September 15, 2015 at 12 noon CDT to rdf@tamu.edu
(All cover pages will be posted for the campus community to view at http://rdf.tamu.edu/abstracts)

Proposal Title: Formation of Core Sensory Facility

Lead contact:

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Key Participating units: **Animal Science Department; Poultry Science Department; Agricultural Economics Department; Soil and Crop Sciences Department; Biological & Agricultural Engineering Department; Horticultural Sciences Department; Chemistry Department**

Anticipated Request Amount ($): **$1,500,000**

Executive summary of the intended proposal.

This project proposes renovation and expansion of the Texas A&M AgriLife's sensory testing facilities to upgrade antiquated laboratories and equipment so that Texas A&M can remain competitive in this field, and to facilitate expansion of collaborative capability, expand the volume and scope of testing, and enable new multidisciplinary collaboration. The laboratory also has safety deficiencies, outdated equipment, and no longer meets modern standards of design.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Sensory Testing Facilities provide unique resources that enable research, teaching, and outreach activities related to assessment, testing, and analysis of sensory properties of food. This critical resource is home to research programs that have made significant impact nationally and internationally, producing data that have informed and influenced US Dietary Guidelines; contributed nutrition data for USDA Handbook 8 for beef and lamb products; and shaped development of USDA meat grading standards (beef, pork and lamb).

The project would expand the sensory programs to a state-of-the-art service-based sensory testing core facility, accessible to users on a fee basis. The upgrades would also enhance small molecule analysis capabilities (GC and MS) and foster new collaborations between Texas A&M AgriLife and the Department of Chemistry, enhancing both research and teaching programs. The program will require the first renovation of the Kleberg Sensory Testing laboratory since 1978, instrumentation and equipment upgrades and skilled technical staff.

The sensory facilities already have national and international recognition and involve collaboration with 12 major universities, 35 food companies, 3 state and federal agencies and 5 commodity groups. Upgrade and expansion of capacity will enhance reputational stature to make Texas A&M highly competitive for funding proposals and other opportunities to lead international food sensory research activities. Importantly expansion will make the facility much more accessible for research and will result in expanded faculty and student access and use.