

AACC International members each have their own story, and we want to highlight all of their amazing accomplishments. "Spotlights" is a series of individual and institutional member interviews capturing the unique stories of our many volunteers and their journeys with AACCI.



**Julie M. Jones**  
St. Catherine University  
Member for 44 years

**Q: What is your current position and what type of work do you do?**

**A:** I am a distinguished scholar and professor emerita at St. Catherine University (SCU) in St. Paul, MN. I started as an instructor at the University of Minnesota (UMN), Department of Food Science and Nutrition, and finished nearly 40 years later as a full professor at SCU. I was also an adjunct professor at UMN. In addition, I do some writing and speaking and sit on a variety of advisory boards that deal with nutri-

tion, grains, carbohydrate, dietary fiber, glycemic response, and diets.

**Q: When and how did you first decide you wanted to work in cereal grain science?**

**A:** I didn't really decide to work in the field. It just evolved as a result of my participation in AACC International and IFT local sections and attendance at some national meetings. Because AACCI headquarters were in the Twin Cities and it was a small, focused organization, it was easy to get to know people and to get involved. The organization offered both opportunities and mentors who encouraged my increased participation.

**Q: How have you been involved with AACCI? How has your involvement with AACCI enriched your career?**

**A:** I started as treasurer of the AACCI Minnesota Section and held many roles at the local level, including chair. At the national level, I started working on AACCI short courses, writing a monthly column for *Cereal Foods World*, and organizing meeting sessions and workshops and continued on with many activities until I served as AACCI president and chair of the AACCI Board of Directors. I have continued to contribute to the association in many ways. Every time I said "yes" to a request, my career was enriched by learning new things, traveling to new places, and meeting wonderful people who helped me in my career and became friends. I loved the annual meetings, as they were a manageable size, offered good science, and created wonderful interactions that resulted in connections with important colleagues and good friends.

**Q: In what ways do you see health and nutrition affecting advancements in cereal- and pulse-based foods? How are health issues affecting cereal science and the cereal grain industry overall?**

**A:** Health and nutrition should play an important role in grain-based foods. Although these foods form the base of dietary guidance in many countries, their position is being challenged as high-carbohydrate, processed foods with little nutritive value. This message seems to contrast the actual data, which show that intake of whole grains, dietary fiber from grains,

and the right balance of enriched/fortified of grains is associated with better health. The latter messages about the healthfulness of grains are not being understood or actualized in changing consumer behavior in most parts of the world.

The industry must do everything possible to ensure that grain-based foods are rich in dietary fiber and nutrients and get the "microphone" back to tell consumers how important these foods are in the diet. Further, the industry needs to own the fact that grain-based desserts and snacks are overconsumed by many and that these foods must be eaten in moderation. It must work actively with public health groups to find ways for these foods to be available but not overconsumed. The industry also needs to help consumers understand how additives are used to preserve nutrients, keep costs low, and enhance nutritional value through enrichment and fortification. Changes in breeding of grains, varieties chosen, new processes for developing foods with slower glycemic responses, and techniques such as biofortification are just a few ways in which the industry can help to improve foods for better health.

**Q: This issue of *Cereal Foods World* focuses on breeding and processing of grains and pulses to deliver health benefits. Do you have any perspectives on this topic?**

**A:** Breeding can be used to improve grains and pulses in a number of ways, including 1) grains with more resistant starch and fiber in the endosperm, both to increase fiber intake and to lower glycemic response; 2) increased proteins in both grains and pulses that have higher biological value and easier digestibility; 3) grains and pulses with lower phytate and other antinutritional factors to improve iron and zinc absorbability; 4) grains with better translocation of minerals from the soil (regular and biofortified); and 5) grains with gluten that is functional but easier to digest.

**Q: What's next for you?**

**A:** I will continue to write and speak on the importance of dietary fiber; consuming the right balance of whole and refined, enriched, and fortified grain-based staple foods; and overall dietary balance, such as DASH- or Mediterranean-style diets. I will continue to defend the judicious use of sugar to improve nutrient intakes from foods such as bran cereals and yogurts: the right/balanced choice of processed foods (not the damning of processed foods) is important for diets that meet today's lifestyles, enable women in the workforce, reduce food waste and loss, and keep costs low. Consumers need no instructions to "avoid processed and ultraprocessed foods," rather they need help choosing the right mix of foods from all levels of processing to create diets that meet their calorie and nutrient needs. I will also try to change the language we use to characterize dietary patterns from the "white bread, potato, and meat pattern" to the "pattern that does not contain the right amount of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and lower fat meats and dairy." Finally, we need to help consumers see that there are foods to be chosen daily and foods to be enjoyed infrequently.

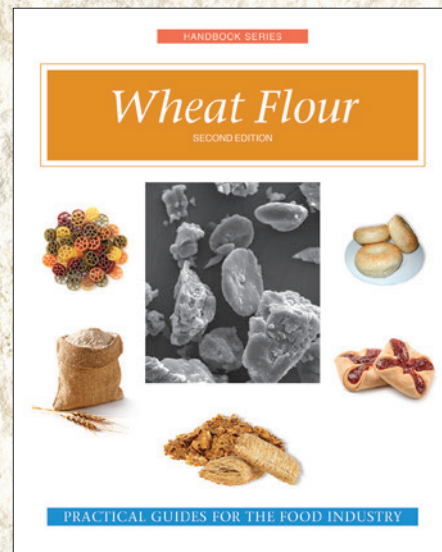


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