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The Past: Tasty teaching

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CRISPR

Eduard Akhunov, professor of plant pathology, explains, in under 100 words, what CRISPR technology is and how it can revolutionize the global food system to feed the world’s growing population.

CRISPR is part of the bacterial immune system and is designed to search and destroy invading viruses using a CRISPR-associated DNA-cutting enzyme called Cas9. Cas9 uses the short pieces of RNA as guides to detect invader’s DNA and cut it. Scientists use this technique to precisely “edit” genes in any organism, including major agricultural crops. CRISPR-Cas9 is faster and more effective than traditional breeding methods and holds great promise to solve many problems in agriculture. Breeders have started using CRISPR-Cas9 to create crops that are higher yielding, more resistant to diseases and extreme climates, and more nutritious and tasty.

Tasty teaching

The dairy bar at Kansas State University, pictured here in 1941 in Waters Hall, is a beloved tradition of students and alumni. The dairy bar opened in 1923 and was in the west wing of Waters Hall until it moved to its current Call Hall location in 1964. The sales counter serves as a retail outlet for products from the College of Agriculture’s animal sciences and industry department. The product line has expanded from milk and “shocks” of ice cream to also include eggs, cheese, apple, wheat products and more than 30 flavors of ice cream. See pages 20-27 to learn how K-State continues to make food better and safer.

Photo courtesy of the Richard L. D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections.