

Dr. Christy Bratcher

Christy Bratcher is a professor of meat science in the Department of Animal Sciences in the College of Agriculture at Auburn University. Bratcher investigates the safety of processed meats, pre- and post-harvest meat animal food safety, and consumer acceptance of niche market products. She is currently leading a USDA-funded project to identify gaps in food safety and security procedures among local and regional animal producers and processors who sell directly to consumers and farmers markets. The end goal is a certification program designed to give local and regional operators added credibility in the hopes of stimulating rural economies. Bratcher is also investigating novel ways to introduce both natural and synthetic antimicrobials as pre-processing technologies to reduce microbial load on the surface of meat. She teaches and mentors both undergraduate and graduate students, and has won several awards related to education. In 2018, she received the Leischuck Endowed Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching, the highest teaching honor given by Auburn University. On the outreach side, her activities include helping processors throughout the state address issues related to food safety, processing, and business opportunities in meat as well as working with the Alabama Cattlemen's Association and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System to deliver educational programs to chefs, students, and meat industry representatives. Bratcher is also director of the Auburn University Food Systems Institute, which provides an infrastructure for promoting interdisciplinary research, outreach, teaching, and training opportunities relating to food systems. The institute works with everyone from faculty in academia to food industry personnel and consumers in the general public. Prior to Auburn, Bratcher worked in the meat industry as food safety and quality assurance director at a meat company. She received both her bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science from the University of Florida before going on to earn her doctorate in animal science from the University of Missouri.

