

Luis Alexis Rodríguez-Cruz

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. student in Food Systems

August 2017 –

University of Vermont

Advisor: Dr. Meredith T. Niles

M.S. in Food Science and Technology

2018

University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez

Thesis: *Food Safety Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Amongst Small Scale Commercial Fishermen of Western Puerto Rico.*

Advisor: Dr. Fernando Pérez-Muñoz

Graduate Committee: Dr. María del Carmen Rodríguez-Rodríguez & Dr. Robinson Rodríguez-Pérez

B.S. in Biology with sub-concentration in Biotechnology

2014

University of Puerto Rico at Ponce, *Cum Laude*

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- *Food security, climate change, agricultural resilience, food systems, Caribbean & Puerto Rican studies, island food systems, trade policy, extension & outreach, and food culture.*

ONGOING DISSERTATION RESEARCH

- *Understanding Puerto Rican Farmers' Experiences with Climate Change and Hurricane Maria.*

- Objective: Assess drivers and barriers to climate change adaptation, specific to extreme events, and its implications for food security and resilience outcomes among Puerto Rican farmers.

- Developed survey, and established a collaboration initiative with the Extension Service of the University of Puerto Rico. Extension agents carried out the Puerto Rico-wide survey (~440 farmers)

- Current status: Data was entered, and briefs were prepared (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) to highlight findings and key descriptive results. Further statistical analysis will proceed.

RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Consultant

November 2018 –

Vermont Caribbean Institute, Burlington, Vermont

- Provides consulting on climate change adaptation workshops for a collaborative project between the Vermont Caribbean Institute and the *Unidad Presupuestaria de Servicios Ambientales* (Baracoa, Guantánamo, Cuba)

Research Assistant

August 2017 –

Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, University of Vermont

Assistant to Dr. Meredith T. Niles

- Project: *Assessing the cumulative impact of policy stacking on Vermont farmers.*
 - Prepared data sheets for coding and statistical analysis.

Research Assistant,

2016 – 2017

Extension Service, University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez

Assistant to Dr. María del Carmen Rodríguez-Rodríguez

- Project: *Development of Culturally-Sensitive-Age-Appropriate Nutrition Education Materials for Childhood Obesity Prevention in Puerto Rico.* (USDA NIFA-AFRI)
 - Conducted 3 focus groups. Performed 5 verbatim transcriptions, and analyzed them through content analysis. Assessed current barriers on acquiring healthy food, promoting physical activity, and on healthy eating perceptions among Puerto Rican parents and children.

Biology Assistant

2014

Fisheries Division of the Department of Agriculture, San Juan, PR.

Supervisor: Salvador Coleman Tió

- Conducted surveys, organized meetings, and developed an updated registry of the fisheries of the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture.

Undergraduate Researcher

2014

Department of Biology, University of Puerto Rico at Ponce

Assistant to Dr. José G. Rodríguez

- Project: *A Comparison of Two Genetic Populations of *Atlantea tulita*.*
 - Gathered field data, and performed genetic tests (e.g. PCR, gel electrophoresis)

Volunteer Assistant

2012 –2013

AIDS Program of the Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Ponce, PR.

Assistant to Dr. Qiyi Tang

- Performed techniques such as: cloning using the Bacterial Artificial Chromosome, Overlapping PCR, Electroporation, and other molecular techniques.

Intern

2012

Tropical Agriculture Research Station, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Mayagüez, PR

Mentor: Timothy Porch, Ph.D.

- Project: *Characterization, Conversion, and Improvement of Common Bean Germplasm.*
 - Performed genetic techniques (e.g. PCR, gel electrophoresis), developed a photographic database for tepary beans, and carried out field work (e.g. virus inoculation, data analysis on-site)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE**Teaching Assistant**

2017 –

Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, University of Vermont

(Cont.)

- Basic Concepts of Food Laboratory (NFS 054) (Spring Semester 2018)
 - Instructor of two laboratory sessions (12 and 16 students each).
 - Intertwined culinary skills with food science and technology .
- Food Microbiology Laboratory (NFS 213) (Fall Semesters 2017, and 2018)
 - Instructor of two laboratory sessions (16-20 students each).

(Cont.)

- Prepared laboratory materials: media cultures, sanitation of equipment, etc.

Teaching Assistant

2014 – 2017

Department of Biology, University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez

- Human Anatomy and Physiology Laboratory (BIOL 3716) (2015-2018)
 - Instructor of 2-3 laboratory sessions per semester with 15-20 students each .
 - Prepared laboratory materials: dissection organs, anatomical schemes, etc.
 - Incorporated experiential learning techniques, as well as the arts.
- Biological Sciences Laboratory (CIBI 3032) (2014 – 2015)
 - Instructor of 2-3 laboratory sessions per semester with 15-20 students each.
 - Assisted Mr. Donato Seguí, coordinator of the laboratory, in leading TA meetings.
 - Incorporated an interdisciplinary approach to satisfy the diverse interests of students.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Research

1. Robinson Rodríguez-Pérez, PhD, Nancy Correa-Matos, PhD, RDH, LND, Angélica Valdés-Valderrama, MS, **Luis Alexis Rodríguez-Cruz, MS**, María C. Rodríguez, PhD. Barriers to Healthy Eating Adolescents in Puerto Rico: A Qualitative Study of Parents and Child Perceptions Regarding Healthy Eating Patterns. In Press at *Journal of Nutrition and Education Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2018.10.002>

Non-research

1. **Luis Alexis Rodríguez Cruz** (2018) From Ocean to Table: Integrating Marine and Coastal Food Systems into Food Studies. *Cite This*, a special edition of the *Graduate Journal of Food Studies*. 5(2). <https://gradfoodstudies.org/2018/12/11/from-ocean-to-table/>

LITERARY PUBLICATION

1. *Cuentos Color Mostaza* (A compilation of short stories) (July 2015) ISBN: 9781514611203

LITERARY PUBLICATION IN PREPARATION

1. *Era su oficio* (A compilation of short stories).

AWARDS, HONORS & FELLOWSHIPS

Graduate Fellow

The Gund Institute for the Environment, University of Vermont (2018 –).

- “The Gund Institute for Environment brings scholars and leaders together to accelerate research, uncover solutions and tackle the world's most pressing environmental issues.”

Graduate Fellow

Borlaug Summer Institute on Global Food Security, 2018. Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana.

- One of the 40 accepted graduate students nationwide (United States) interested in “developing a holistic understanding of the conceptual challenges around global food security.”

Graduate Fellow

Yale Ciencia Academy, 2018. Yale University and Ciencia Puerto Rico.

- One of 40 PhD students selected nationwide (United States & Puerto Rico) to participate in a year-long career development program were students participate in science outreach.

Graduate Assistantship

Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, University of Vermont (2017)

Graduate Winner

Student Diversity Program of the 2017 USDA’s Agricultural Outlook Forum, Washington, D.C.

- One of 10 graduate students selected nationwide for a highly competitive program that exposes students to contemporary agribusiness, future trends, scientific research and agricultural policy.

USDA Graduate Fellow

The Caminos Project (USDA-NIFA), Texas State University (October 2016)

- One of twelve graduate students from underrepresented populations in the US, chosen to participate in a multidisciplinary training in the agricultural sciences.

Honorable Mention in Poetry

Literary Contest of the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (May 2015)

Best Presentation and People’s Choice Awards

New Food Product Development Competition of the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (November 2014)

INVITED PRESENTATION, PANEL, AND WORKSHOP

Panelist. *Climate Change and Resilience.* Alongside Chathurika Wijewardana, Valens Niyigena, and Saleh Ahmed. Borlaug Summer Institute on Global Food Security. June 13, 2018. Perdue Center for Global Food Security, Perdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana.

Discussant. *Peer Mentoring Chat: Isolation and Imposter Syndrome* (webinar). Alongside Sofía Machiavelli-Girón & Liz Hernández. Yale Ciencia Academy. June 12, 2018. Yale University and Ciencia Puerto Rico.

Invited class speaker. Basic Spanish, Prof. Marta García Nieves. December 8, 2016. Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus. Was invited to speak to students about the process of writing *Cuentos color mostaza.*

POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Volunteer

Puerto Rico Science Policy Action Network (PR-SPAN) (2018 –).

- A Ciencia Puerto Rico initiative that seeks to motivate Puerto Rican scientists to inform policymakers at all levels on the development and implementation of evidenced-based policies.

• Responsibilities: Policy tracking at the Puerto Rico & Federal levels, writing alerts on policies and action recommendations.

CERTIFICATIONS

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) & Standard Sanitizing Operating Procedure (SSOP)

University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (May 2016)

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)

University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (May 2016)

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)

University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (May 2016)

OTHER SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Spanish (first language)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), August 2018 –

Ciencia Puerto Rico, October 2017 –

Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), July 2015 –

βββ Honor Society, Zeta Kappa Chapter. University of Puerto Rico at Ponce, August 2010 –