



# European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe)

---

## ***Newsletter*** ***Volume 4, No.3, September 2002***

---

### **Important Notice**

This issue of the EurSafe Newsletter includes the Call for Papers for the 4<sup>th</sup> EurSafe Conference “*Ethics as a Dimension of Agrifood Policy*” in Toulouse (France) on March 20-22, 2003. The deadline for submission of abstracts for this conference is November 15, 2002. More information, e-mail: [emmanuel.jolivet@jouy.inra.fr](mailto:emmanuel.jolivet@jouy.inra.fr) or website: <http://capoul.toulouse.inra.fr/eursafe2003/> (see page 5).

### **Table of Contents**

The Slow Food Movement	2
Ethics as a Dimension of Agrifood Policy	5
Conferences & Courses	7
Books & Journals	9
Political Calls for Criticism	10
Philosophy and Ethics in Genomics and Nutrigenomics	12
Ethics in the Sixth Framework Programme	14
EurSafe Information	15
Newsletter	16
Application Form	17

# The Slow Food Movement

*Mara Miele*  
*University of Pisa, Italy*

***Slow Food is an international consumers and producers movement concerned about typical products and regional cuisines, which counts about 70,000 members in over 45 countries around the world.***

It was first established in Bra, a small town in the Piedmont region in the North of Italy, in 1986 by a group of food writers and chefs who became concerned about the potential impact of fast-food chains on regional food cultures in Italy<sup>1</sup>. The movement was organised in local units, co-ordinated by a central headquarters in Bra. The local units, called “condotte”, started to set up a number of activities aimed at promoting consumers’ awareness of local typical production (thematic dinners in typical restaurants, wine tasting with local producers, taste-labs in schools and other local initiatives). These branches were initially established in all the Italian regions but soon began to spread to other European countries and then further afield (outside Italy the “condotte” are called “convivia”). In 1989 *Slow Food* was formally launched as an international movement. In that year representatives from twenty countries attended a meeting in Paris and agreed both an international structure and a manifesto. The manifesto stated: “*Our aim is to rediscover the richness and aromas of local cuisines to fight the standardisation of Fast Food*”.

In the beginning, the Italian movement’s founders were concerned that the arrival of the fast food chains, with their offer of standardised and cheap meals in modern and “youth appealing” environments, would threaten the local

osterie. These small Italian eateries serve local dishes based on typical products and local wines at very reasonable prices, but they are not always competitive with the fast food restaurants. The *Slow Food* movement argued that the protection of these traditional eateries, considered the heart of the regional cuisines, required a more radical intervention in the promotion of local food cultures that should have started from the promotion and protection of typical products. This philosophy gained consensus in many other countries, first in Europe (Germany, France) and later in the USA, Australia, Japan, China. With the growth of the movement the objective of its initiatives became more focussed in the assertion of the rights to natural and cultural biodiversity.

*Slow Food* first began to disseminate information about typical foods and regional dishes and the challenges they face. The promotion of the local and typical cuisines is mainly attained through the publishing company, established in 1990. *Slow Food Editore* publishes a range of guides that propose the more characteristic osterie proposing regional cuisine, typical products, and identify the best local wines in each region. The main guides are *Osterie d'Italia*, a guide to the traditional cuisine of the Italian regions, and *Vini d'Italia*, a wine guide published in collaboration with the Gambero Rosso food monthly. However, as the movement has internationalised, so its publications have begun to focus upon typical foods found outside Italy. The movement’s quarterly magazine *Slow* is produced in five languages and carries articles on foods from around the world.

Another important area of intervention is represented by the national or international initiatives. The most

---

<sup>1</sup> The immediate motivation was given by the arrival of McDonald’s in Italy, with the opening of the second restaurant in Rome, in the famous Piazza di Spagna.

noteworthy is *Il Salone del Gusto* (The Hall of Taste), a food fair held every two years in Turin that attracts a large number of visitors (next one will be the October 24-28, 2002) <sup>2</sup>.

The activities outlined above are mostly aimed at consumers. However, since it began to identify the importance of local cuisines in maintaining food diversity, *Slow Food* has also become aware of the problems faced by the producers and processors of the products, which compose local cuisines. It has therefore begun to play a more direct role in the protection and promotion of such products.

During the last fifteen years *Slow Food* has broadened its objectives and has changed the character of its activities. More recently a complementary set of activities has become the centre of the movement's efforts. The new activities are aimed at rescuing from "extinction" the typical products that are facing a dramatic decline in their market. These are long term projects that require the co-operation of a large number of actors – farmers, food processors, retailers, local institutions, restaurant owners and so forth.

The first of these initiatives was the *Ark of Taste*, launched in the 1996, which aims to "save from extinction" minor typical products that are experiencing a decline of their markets. The aim of the *Ark of Taste* is to rediscover, catalogue, describe and promote the almost forgotten flavours of the most typical products ( such as *lardo di Colonnata* or *violino di capra* cured meats, the plum tomato of Corbara, the cheese *Caciocavallo podolico* and many other products in danger of extinction), with real productive and commercial potential but threatened by industrial standardisation, hyper-hygienist legislation, the rules of the large-scale retail trade and the deterioration of the environment.

To assist this activity an Advisory Commission (composed of researchers,

journalists and other food "experts") was formed in order to identify the main criteria and evaluate products proposed for inclusion in the *Ark*. The Commission was charged with gathering information on the processing, cultivation or breeding techniques, and commercial potential of the products and also with developing intervention strategies to facilitate their "rescue". As part of this project, *Slow Food* has begun a major "census" of quality small-scale agroindustrial production and has encouraged *Slow Food* osterie (i.e. those listed in *Osterie d'Italia*) to include the products in their dishes. The *Ark* project thus aims to enlarge the market for these lesser-known products. The *Ark of Taste* is not limited to Italy. In many other countries the *Slow Food* convivia have identified suitable products and are setting up advisory committees and are defining selection criteria. Some of the five Italian criteria - that of gastronomic excellence in particular - apply elsewhere, but more specific criteria need to be distinguished in each country. The historical link with the local area, for example, means one thing in Europe, another in America and another again in Australia.

*Slow Food* is now broadening the range of these producer-oriented initiatives. It recently established local groups (*Praesidia*) in order to provide practical assistance to small producers of typical products (e.g. organising commercial workshops, identifying new marketing channels). The *praesidia* represent concrete, specific local interventions. They are aimed at sourcing the funds needed to purchase and supply equipment, operate as small pilot companies, promote new experiments, provide production incentives and identify new channels for the marketing of quality products at risk of extinction. The activities set up by the *Praesidia* range from the creation of micromarkets (fairs, offers for members, the involvement of inns and restaurants, e-commerce) to marketing and communication projects.

---

<sup>2</sup> For details see the *Slow Food* webpage at [Http://slowfood.com](http://slowfood.com)

Another initiative targeted at producers, and aimed at protecting biodiversity, is the *Slow Food Award for the Defence of Biodiversity*. It aims at encouraging and rewarding activities of research, production, marketing, popularisation and documentation which benefit biodiversity in the agroindustrial field. The first award was given in October 2000 in Bologna, to biologists, fishermen, and small-scale entrepreneurs whose work helps defend the world's biodiversity. And, in a conscious emulation of McDonald's, *Slow Food* has established a *Slow University* which aims to spread good practice in relation to the growing, processing, preparation and consumption of typical products.

This second set of initiatives indicates that the *Slow Food* movement has entered a new stage in its development. As we have seen, it arose as a response to the arrival of McDonald's in Italy, and claimed to be concerned for local osterie. Since that time, its goals have broadened and the organisation has become more complex. Thus, after spending the early years developing the capacity to disseminate

knowledge about local cuisines and typical products to consumers (mostly middle/upper-class consumers), *Slow Food* has now started to engage more directly with producers and processors in order to strengthen the local base of typical production. In so doing, it has shifted its attention from the marketing of typical foods to the full range of activities that lie between producer and consumer. In this respect, the movement stands as an example of a sophisticated reaction to the spread of fast food: it extends from the local to global but seeks to put in place sets of gastronomic relations which effectively promote diversity in food as an intrinsic part of cultural and environmental diversity.

### **References**

- Miele, M. & J. Murdoch, "Slow Food", in: G. Ritzer (ed.), *McDonaldization. The Reader*. Pine Forge Press, CA 2002.
- Petrini, C. (ed.), *Slow Food. Collected Thoughts on Taste, Tradition, and the Honest Pleasures of Food*. Chelsea Green Publishing Company, White River Junction VT 2001.
- Slow Food, *The Ark of Taste and Presidia Slow Food Editore*. Bra, 2000.

# **Ethics as a Dimension of Agrifood Policy**

## **4<sup>TH</sup> EurSafe Conference**

***Toulouse, France***  
***March 20-22, 2003***

### ***Programme Outline***

Agricultural and food policies in developed countries have evolved from stated aims regarding the use of land and other rural resources, the economic status of farmers, fair access to adequate food supplies and appropriate levels of food safety. Although the details of many agrifood policies result from political mediation between competing interest groups, policy makers have assumed the existence of a broad social consensus regarding the underlying aims of these policies. Still less have they been called upon to justify or adapt their policies in response to an ethically concerned public.

In recent years, however, important ethical questions have arisen in connection with various agrifood issues. These include public support for farmers and its distribution; competition between farming and environmental interests; the impact of new technologies on sustainability and animal welfare; the partnership between public research and private industry; food marketing techniques in relation to public health; international trade rules and the development of southern countries; the globalisation of the agrifood complex. The growing capacity to control life, particularly through genetic engineering, and the huge efforts made by some multi-national companies to monopolise commercial use of these techniques are a further source of major public concern.

These ethical questions cannot be addressed without identifying and analysing the conflicts in values that lie behind them. Other issues, of a more social nature, are also worth considering from the ethical point of view. One example is the social status of farmers caught between the increasingly integrated and concentrated

input-supply industries and food processors/distributors; another is the role of public debate in the process of introducing innovations, keeping in mind that social acceptance and ethics are highly distinct concepts.

Ethical concerns raise further questions at the interface with agrifood policy, such as: How can ethical concerns be effectively and reliably signalled to policy makers? What counts as an ethical consensus in matters of public governance? How might the weight to be attached to ethical criteria in complex policy decisions be determined? What is the appropriate level of decision-making - local, national, regional or international - for ethical input into policy formation on various agrifood issues? Is there a need for policy-making institutions to adapt in order better to incorporate society's ethical aspirations?

The EurSafe meeting to be held in Toulouse (France) in March 2003 will address economic and technical developments in the agrifood sector from various ethical perspectives and in relation to policy within Europe and internationally. This may contribute to developing the agenda for future agrifood policies, and to identifying the relevance and scope of ethical considerations as a dimension of these policies.

The invited lectures will address

- a range of levels relevant for policy making: local, national or regional (European Union, Mercosur, Alena), global;
- and the agrifood implications of various key ethical issues: individual and community rights, participation and representation in democratic societies, interdependencies between countries and regions, preservation

of options for future generations, sustainability, public health implications of agrifood policies, distributive justice and fairness (both intra and international), intellectual property rights, appropriate elaboration and use of standards.

### **Call for Papers**

The Scientific Committee of EurSafe 2003 invites submission of papers and posters on subjects closely connected to the field of the congress, as defined in the preceding outline, but also on any other topic relevant to ethical issues related to food and agriculture, such as animal welfare, intrinsic value of nature.

Selection will be made on the basis of abstracts of (no more than) 350 words indicating precisely:

- what is the question addressed?
- what are the concepts and theories to which one refers?
- which methodology is used?
- what are the results obtained?

and according to the following criteria:

- is the ethical dimension explicitly addressed?
- are agrifood issues explicitly addressed?
- is the work proposed innovative in some sense?
- how high is the quality of the arguments?

### **Procedure for Submitting Abstracts of Papers or Posters**

1. Abstracts of contributed papers or posters are due on November 15, 2002.
2. Authors should indicate whether it is a paper or a poster.
3. Abstracts should be 350 words or less, written according the above mentioned recommendations and including keywords.

4. Abstracts should be submitted as a file attachment by e-mail to: [Claire.Coudrin@roazhon.inra.fr](mailto:Claire.Coudrin@roazhon.inra.fr)
5. Authors will be notified of paper or poster acceptance by e-mail before december 13, 2002.
6. Authors will be required to send the final draft of their abstract (for posters) or extended abstract (for papers) before January 24, 2003.

### **Important Dates**

NOVEMBER 15, 2002

- Deadline for submission of abstract

DECEMBER 13, 2002

- Authors notified of accepted papers and posters

JANUARY 24, 2003

- Final draft of abstracts or extended abstracts due

MARCH 20-22, 2003

- EurSafe Congress

### **Organisation**

#### Scientific Committee

Bernard CHEVASSUS-AU-LOUIS (*Chairman*), Volkert BEEKMAN, Alison BURRELL, Ruth CHADWICK, José T. ESQUINAS-ALCÁZAR, Mats G. HANSSON, Humberto ROSA, Peter SANDØE, Mariachiara TALLACCHINI, Johan De TAVERNIER

#### Local Organising Committee

Jean-Claude FLAMANT, Hervé OSSARD, Christine BARBACE, Cédric CASPAR, Erwane MONTHUBERT, Valérie PÉAN

#### Scientific Editor

Pierre RAINELLI

#### Programme Coordinator:

Emmanuel JOLIVET (E-MAIL: [Emmanuel.Jolivet@jouy.inra.fr](mailto:Emmanuel.Jolivet@jouy.inra.fr))

### **More information**

The host organisation of the Fourth EurSafe Congress is INRA, website:

<http://capoul.toulouse.inra.fr/eursafe2003>

/

## Conferences & Courses

### October – December 2002

- Oct 1 - 3**     ***Thought for Food. Celebrating Innovative Food Technology (New Zealand)***  
NZIFST Conference 2002, Palmerstone North, New Zealand. More information, website: <http://www.nzifst.org.nz/con2002/homepage1>
- Oct 10**       ***Genetic Engineering and the Cloning of Farm Animals (UK)***  
Panel Debate, London. More information, phone: + 44 1730 268070; e-mail: [ciwitrust@ciwf.co.uk](mailto:ciwitrust@ciwf.co.uk), website: <http://www.ciwf.co.uk/FUSE/FUSE%20homepage.htm>.
- Oct 10 - 11**   ***Sozialethische Aspekte der Biopatentierung (Germany)***  
University of Tuebingen. More information, website: <http://www.izew.uni-tuebingen.de>
- Oct 10 - 14**   ***The 7th International Symposium on Biosafety of GMOs (China)***  
Symposium held in Beijing. More information: Hongya Gu, Beijing, phone + 86 10 62751847/62752497; fax + 86 10 62751841/62751194; e-mail: biosafe@pku.edu.cn; website: <http://www.worldbiosafety.net>
- Oct 13 – 15**   ***Food Safety (Germany)***  
Karlsruhe, Bundesforschungsanstalt für Ernährung. More information, website: <http://www.bfa-ernaehrung.de>
- Oct 14 – 15**   ***Science for Society – Science with Society: How can research on food and agriculture better respond to citizens expectations and demands? (Belgium)***  
EURAGRI, Brussels. More information: Euragri Office, P.O. Box 9101, 6700 HB Wageningen, The Netherlands, phone + 31 317 485573, fax + 31 317 485617, e-mail: euragri@co.wag-ur.nl
- Oct 18 – 19**   ***International Conference Between Technology and Humanity (Belgium)***  
Congress Palace, Brussels, Belgium. More information, e-mail: [post@caritas.be](mailto:post@caritas.be)
- Oct 21 – 23**   ***Nachhaltige Ernährung (Germany)***  
Oktober Tutzing, Evangelische Akademie Schloss Tutzingen. More information, website: <http://www.ev-akademie-tutzing.de/>
- Oct 23 - 25**   ***Future Food & Bioethics. Towards an International Convention on Biotech in the Plant and Foods Area (Denmark)***  
Centre for Ethics and Law in Nature and Society, bioTIK, Danish Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs. Copenhagen. More information, website: <http://www.futurefood.dk>
- Oct 25 – 28**   ***Mensch, Ernährung und Gesundheit, Nutrigenomik (Germany)***

University of Potsdam, vdbiol-Jahrestagung. More information, website:  
<http://www.vdbiol.de>

**Oct 26 - 28**     ***3rd International Symposium on Sustainable Agri-Environmental Systems: New Technologies and Applications (Egypt)***

National Authority for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences (NARSS), Cairo, Egypt. More information, phone (202) 2964386 2975688, fax (202) 2964387 2964385, e-mail: [sirahman@intouch.com](mailto:sirahman@intouch.com), website: [http://www.ifama.org/calendar/nonmem\\_caldetail.asp?calid=76](http://www.ifama.org/calendar/nonmem_caldetail.asp?calid=76)

**Nov 5**     ***Biotechnology and GM Foods - Current Issues Seminar Chipping (UK)***

Meeting held in Campden, UK. More information, phone + 44 1386 842104; fax + 44 1386 842100; e-mail: [Training@campden.co.uk](mailto:Training@campden.co.uk); website: <http://www.campden.co.uk/>

**Nov 5 - 6**     ***More People, Less Land - Technology's Role in Sustainable Agriculture in Asia (Thailand)***

Meeting held in Bangkok, Thailand. This conference will examine the role that two technologies - Agbiotechnology and Information Technology - can play in achieving sustainable agricultural development. More information: Dr. Andrew Powell, Conference Director, website: <http://www.croplifeasia.org/morepeoplelessland/>

**Nov 7 - 9**     ***Die Grenzen von Genen, Geld und Gelehrten (Germany)***

Zukunftsforum Naturwissenschaft und Gesellschaft im Dialog, Berlin, Max-Delbrück-Center for moleculare medicine, co-operation of the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung and the researchproject "Diskurs zur Ethik in der Biomedizin". More information, website: <http://www.bioethik-diskurs.de> or <http://www.bpb.de>

**Nov 22 - 23**     ***Effective Communication and Dissemination of Bioscience Information in Europe (Czech Republic)***

ECOD-BIO workshop Prague. Deadline registration: October 15, 2002. More information, website: <http://www.vib.be>, email: [ann.vangysel@vib.be](mailto:ann.vangysel@vib.be) Rijnvisschestraat 120, B-9052 Gent, Belgium, phone + 32 9 2446611, fax + 32 9 2446610.

**Nov 24 - 29**     ***Bioteconología Habana 2002: Agro-Biotech in the new millennium (Cuba)***

More information, e-mail: [bioagro@cigb.edu.cu](mailto:bioagro@cigb.edu.cu), website: <http://bioagro.cigb.edu.cu/>

**Dec 6 - 7**     ***Knowledge for the Sustainability Transition (Germany)***

Berlin, International Conference on the Human Dimension of Global Environmental Change, More information, website: <http://www.environmental-policy.de/>

**2003**

**Jan 11- 15**     ***Plant and Animal Genomes XI Conference (USA)***

Meeting held in San Diego, CA, USA. More information: Darrin Scherago, phone: + 1 212 643 1750; fax + 1 212 643 1758; e-mail pag@scherago.com; website: <http://www.intl-pag.org/pag/>

**Mar 20 – 22** ***Ethics as a Dimension of Agrifood Policy, 4<sup>th</sup> EurSafe Congress (France)***  
Toulouse, France. More information: e-mail: [Emmanuel.Jolivet@jouy.inra.fr](mailto:Emmanuel.Jolivet@jouy.inra.fr),  
website: <http://capoul.toulouse.inra.fr/eursafe2003/>

**Apr 2 – 4** ***UFAW Symposium Science in the Service Of Animal Welfare (UK)***  
University of Edinburgh, UK. More information, e-mail: [scioff@ufaw.org.uk](mailto:scioff@ufaw.org.uk)

**Jul 16 - 20** ***Feeding the World: Opportunities without Boundaries (USA)***  
12th World Congress of Food Science and Technology (IUFOST Congress XII),  
Chicago, Illinois, USA. More information, website:  
<http://www.worldfoodscience.org/congress/overview.html>

**Aug 10 - 17** ***XXst World Congress of Philosophy: Philosophy Facing World Problems***  
International Federation of the Philosophical Society, Istanbul, Turkey. More  
information: fax 90-312-0296, website <http://www.tfk.org.tr/>

## Books & Journals

**Anwander, N. et al., *Gene patentieren*.  
Mentis, Paderborn 2002.**

This book provides an ethical analysis of the highly discussed trend of patenting genes. The authors discuss all common arguments for and against patenting and analyse their normative and rational sense.

### ***Grüne Gentechnik***

More information and final documents on German Discourse Project of the Federal Ministry for Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture “Grüne Gentechnik” you may find at website:

<http://www.transgen.de/diskurs> or  
<http://www.verbraucherministerium.de/>

**Karafyllis, N. & J.C. Schmidt (eds.),  
*Zugänge zur Rationalität der Zukunft*.  
Metzler Verlag, 2002.**

Rationality is very important for science and modern argumentation. However, in the interdisciplinary context one may ask whether rationality of an economist is the same as of a biologist or a physicist. This book tries to enlighten the different perspectives on this important term and also to embed it in a more practice-oriented discussion of the good life.

## Political Calls for Criticism

*Gitte Meyer*

***“Sustaining Humanity Beyond Humanism”*** was the title of the first European Ethics Summit, taking place in The European Parliament in Brussels on August 29-30, 2002. The summit was organised by the European Ethics Network - an umbrella for four networks: Societas Ethica, European Association of Centres of Medical Ethics, European Business Ethics Network and EurSafe. More than 250 participants from more than 25 countries took part in the conference, covering a wide array of academic specialities and research topics.

The present use of academic advice on ethical questions in the EU was subject to rather harsh political criticism at the European Ethics Summit taking place in Brussels. Sketches of a new and demanding role for academic expertise in European politics were drawn by representatives of the two largest groups in the Parliament, representing the traditional left and right, as well as by Jérôme Vignon, principal adviser to the European Commission.

Academics shying away from contact with politics, for fear they will not be allowed a critical role, would have been relieved by the sketches. Criticism was called for. Solutions to political problems were not. On the other hand, academics engaged in maintaining traditional academic authority and seclusion possibly would have found some messages hard to swallow. Vivid participation in public debate was called for – and dialogue and clear language, accessible to others than fellow specialists.

### ***Not answers, but dialogue***

Taking part in a political panel-debate at the conference, Peter Liese, German member of the European People's Party group in the Parliament, with a professional background in human genetics, focused on

biotechnology. He described ethical discussions as unavoidable in decision-making on biotechnology. Nevertheless, he claimed, the Commission and the national governments try to avoid discussions relating to values, supposedly for fear of slowing down economy. While economics is being framed as a European issue, ethics is characterised as being a national concern. According to Peter Liese, however, *“ethics is neither national nor European. It is global”*.

Regarding the most delicate issues, the Commission tends to ask the advisory European Group on Ethics for advice, Peter Liese continued. Statements from the group are used directly in proposals, and members of Parliament arguing for changes, he said, are likely to be countered with the argument that they will be up against the ethical experts. Said Peter Liese: *“But politicians have to be responsible for their own decisions. We have an obligation to listen to advisers and experts, but we cannot delegate our decision-making to them”*. He called for a *“coherent and common debate”* on and between science, politics and ethics.

Another MEP, Maria Martens from the Netherlands - also a member of the European People's Party group - presented criticism along the same lines. Ethical advice should not be presented as objective, she said. She also stated that at present value aspects of politics were being downplayed, and she appealed to professionals to be aware of realities of political life such as time pressure and to make themselves accessible for dialogue when needed.

Divisions along party lines were not easily discernible. Gianni Vattimo, professor of philosophy at the University of Turin and member of the socialist group in Parliament, stressed public debate and the existence of a critically minded public as

important to democracy - a basic value. One of his themes was how to free values from naturalism, where norms are drawn from facts. Another theme was expert authority. The strategy most dangerous to democracy would be to define ethics as a specialist monopoly, he argued, pointing at "*representing, interpreting and informing public opinion*" as inseparable tasks.

### **Back to basics**

The agreement among the politicians present could be seen as a sign that ethics was being used for just another parliamentary attack on the privileges of the Commission. However, the speech of Vignon Jérôme, principal adviser to the European Commission, did not support interpretations of the sort. Vignon Jérôme was equally critical. Presenting himself as a privileged witness since the early eighties to the development of the European institutions, he argued for a return to basic humanist values motivating the entrepreneurs of the European Community.

Being a spokesman for "*a spirit of stewardship and openness*" he saw a risk of European politics degenerating into insulation from the public, thereby alienating the public from the European institutions, which are perceived to be arrogant and only into extending their own power: "*The Commission is, I suppose, the most distinct victim of this perception - and not totally without reason*", he said. The remedy, he felt, must be that the European institutions turn to taking the ethical dimensions of their own origin into account.

Having been in charge of the Commission's white paper on governance he referred to the paper as not having been a great success: "*There has been enormous resistance to the paper, inside and outside the system, also in the Commission itself*", he said, suggesting that proposals in the paper,

barring policy-makers from a "*closed shop*" practice were likely to explain the resistance.

Regarding what is needed to be elaborated upon, Vignon Jérôme pointed – as did, in different wordings, a host of other speakers at the conference – to "*the duties related to interpersonal relationship*". Supplementing the dominating attention on the market and the individual, "*solidarity is an important dimension*", he said. Vignon Jérôme hoped "*that this summit will initiate the incorporation of a vivid participation of your networks of ethicists in the day-to-day construction of Europe*", specifying that he was asking for "*a permanent critical company to help the European institutions to live up to their own intentions and principles in decision-making*".

Pat Cox, president of the European Parliament, delivered a personal message from yet another academic having entered the practical life of politics. He presented himself as "*a mere politician among experts*", but there was a dig in the presentation as he also described politics, and the move from principle to practice, as the most complex challenge he had ever experienced, having left economics and reporting behind. "*There are specialists here, even hyperspecialists, but do try to remember that the more specialised one is, the greater the risk of becoming isolated*", Pat Cox appealed to the conference, continuing: "*To bring people with you is a very difficult challenge. Try at least to think about it. Try to use a clear language – plain without being vulgar – to express the complexities you are dealing with*".

The EU White Paper on Governance can be found at website: <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/governance/white_paper/index_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/governance/white_paper/index_en.htm</a>
--

# Philosophy and Ethics in Genomics and Nutrigenomics

**Michiel Korthals**  
**Wageningen, The Netherlands**

## **The Applied Philosophy Group of Wageningen University (The Netherlands) enters the field of philosophical and ethical research in genomics and nutrigenomics.**

A new research focus of the Applied Philosophy Group, Wageningen University, will be on the philosophical problems of genomics and nutrigenomics. The group enters this field in cooperation with researchers from The Netherlands and abroad and with the help of various grants from the National Science Foundation and other funds.

The sharp distinction between food and medicine falls apart with the introduction of genomics and nutrigenomics – a grey zone between these hitherto separate fields in the life sciences emerges. Understanding plant biochemical conversion processes, together with knowledge about how humans metabolise food, will bring prevention to the center of attention in prospective medical and food sciences. Simultaneously, emphasis shifts from health care to healthy living. Food acquires characteristics of medicine and determines what kind of medication is required. Medicine becomes food or influences food intake.

This new grey zone, where health care and food meet, is a battlefield of emerging ethical problems that require constructive ethical thinking and intensive public debate. Four important trends can be discerned:

- (nutri-)genomics enables medical and food sciences to become preventive instead of curative sciences (with far-reaching effects on next generations);

- (nutri-)genomics have an individualising effect by enabling tailor-made individual approaches;
- normative determinants of consumers' choices for high tech food become increasingly important;
- values and social justice in consumer driven food chains may be at odds with the application of genomics and nutrigenomics and its implications for food and health perceptions.

We may further discern the following three main topics:

### *1. New forms of accountability and responsibility for food professionals (scientists, technologists, managers, dieticians and others concerned with the application of genomics and nutrigenomics)*

We conceptualise the emergence of (nutri-)genomics, and the various associated types of medical and food professions, as creating responsibilities that cover the whole life span of patients/consumers. Dieticians, consultation officers, physicians and food communicators all become embedded in preventive overview, control and intervention of daily health and food habits of consumers. Traditional medicine was curative, whereas traditional practices of food implied the single responsibility to produce enough and safe food. With (nutri-)genomics huge shifts in responsibility between medical and food practices are at stake. Food practices will acquire responsibilities that partly belonged to medical practices and partly are entirely new. The still utopian idea of a gene passport can only be effective as health compass, recipe and menu, if it is constantly adapted to new circumstances (like a new

lifestyle or a recently discovered effect of a food product).

## *2. New interfaces between producers, policy makers and consumers with respect to the application of genomics and nutrigenomics*

We will discuss criteria of trustworthiness and accountability of institutions that can reckon on collective consent and enable individuals to make reasonable decisions about food by using two notions of Hirschman (1970), i.e. “exit” and “voice”, added by “access” as a third notion (Korthals, 2001). The right of “voice” not only means that (nutri-)genomics should be accompanied by public debates (Rowe & Frewer, 2000) but also that all kinds of public councils should be firmly anchored in the different practices of the (nutri-)genomics system. These councils should enable stakeholders to be accountable and to raise the substantive issues of how to integrate (nutri-)genomics improvements in social life. The substantive issues in these processes of accountability are not only risks for human health and the environment, but also concerns about the treatment of animals, plants and farmers and about respect for divergent lifestyles (including the lifestyle of those who want to stay aloof of (nutri-) genomics).

## *3. Solidarity and responsibility of patients and consumers vis-à-vis technological developments of genomics and nutrigenomics*

Tailoring is a paradoxical affair: prima facie it means individualisation because of the individual specification of food and medicine. However, collective implications are enormous, e.g., for

relatives, next generations and even the common (genetic) heritage of mankind. Consumers/patients are, for instance, confronted with shifting relations with their relatives in preparing and consuming a meal. New areas of (dis-)agreement and solidarity between parents and children might also emerge. In the case of the management of diabetes patients both trends were already present but they will show their full force in the case of the implications of genomics and nutrigenomics.

### **More information**

We invite everyone with an interest in the philosophy and ethics of genomics and nutrigenomics to contact Prof. Michiel Korthals, Applied Philosophy Group, Wageningen University, e-mail: [michiel.korthals@alg.tf.wag-ur.nl](mailto:michiel.korthals@alg.tf.wag-ur.nl)

### **Cooperation**

- Systematic Philosophy, University of Twente
- Genomics Centre, Utrecht/Wageningen
- University of Pisa
- University of Cardiff
- Centre for Biosystems Genomics
- Product Design and Quality Management Group, Wageningen University
- Human Nutrition and Epidemiology Group, Wageningen University
- Human and Animal Pathology Group, Wageningen University
- Genetics, University of Amsterdam
- Several groups from the EurSafe network

## Ethics in the Sixth Framework Programme

### European Call for Tenders for Studies in Ethics

On July 20, 2002, the European Commission has published a prior information notice for a call for tenders for five studies in different fields of ethics:

1. A study on training courses in ethics in research established in scientific faculties across Europe;
2. A study on national, international and professional training material for ethics in research;
3. A study on local ethics committees for animal welfare;
4. A study on codes of practice for ethics in research;
5. A study for producing a European directory of local ethics committees.

The Call for tenders will be published in the Official Journal of the European Commission on September 5, 2002 (deadline October 14).

#### **More information**

Mrs Barbara Rhode, e-mail: barbara.rhode@cec.eu.int), fax +32 2 2984694.

### EurSafe and FP6

The European Union organises an informative conference on the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6). This conference will take place in Heyzel/Brussels (Belgium) on November 11-13, 2002. During this conference the EU will provide information to different researchers from the European Community about FP6.

EurSafe has accepted the kind offer of the EU for an information stand at this conference. In order to be able to inform scientists who are interested in cooperation with ethicists in their applications, EurSafe would like to present short information on different groups working in this field.

If your institute wishes to be included in our information, please send a short description of your institute (maximum of 100 words) to be included in our factsheet. This information should be send to [eursafe@theo.uu.nl](mailto:eursafe@theo.uu.nl) under the heading of *FP6-information*. Deadline for submitting this information: October 15, 2002.

## **EurSafe Information**

### **Secretariat**

Dr. Frans W.A. Brom or Franck Meijboom (Executive Officer), Centre for Bio-ethics and Health Law, Utrecht University, Heidelberglaan 2, 3584 CS Utrecht, The Netherlands, phone + 31 30 2534399, fax + 31 30 2539410, e-mail: [eursafe@theo.uu.nl](mailto:eursafe@theo.uu.nl), website: <http://www.eursafe.org>

### **Executive Committee**

**President** Peter Sandoe, Centre for Bioethics and Risk Assessment, Royal Agricultural and Veterinary University, Buelowsvej 13, 1870 Frederiksberg Copenhagen, Denmark, fax + 45 53703573, e-mail: [pes@kvl.dk](mailto:pes@kvl.dk)

**Vice-President** Claudio Peri, Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Milan, Italy, phone + 39 2 70602063, fax + 39 2 70638625, e-mail: [claudio.peri@unimi.it](mailto:claudio.peri@unimi.it)

**Secretary** Frans W.A. Brom, Centre for Bio-ethics and Health Law, Utrecht University, Heidelberglaan 2, 3584 CS Utrecht, The Netherlands, phone + 31 30 2534399, fax + 31 30 2539410, e-mail: [fbrom@theo.uu.nl](mailto:fbrom@theo.uu.nl)

**Treasurer** Abbo de Wit, Ethics Committee, Royal Agricultural Society, P.O. Box 79, 6700 AB Wageningen, The Netherlands, fax + 31 317 483967, e-mail: [abbo.dewit@users@klv.wag-ur.nl](mailto:abbo.dewit@users@klv.wag-ur.nl)

**Members** Andrea Arz de Falco, Swiss Ethics Committee on Non-Human Gene Technology, Bern, Switzerland, phone + 31 3238383, fax + 313247978, e-mail: [ekah@buwal.admin.ch](mailto:ekah@buwal.admin.ch)

Linda Fulponi, Directorate for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, OECD, Paris, France, e-mail: [linda.fulponi@oecd.org](mailto:linda.fulponi@oecd.org)

Emmanuel Jolivet, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, Centre de Jouy-en-Josas, France, fax + 33 134652088, e-mail: [jolivet@paris.inra.fr](mailto:jolivet@paris.inra.fr)

Ben Mepham, Centre for Applied Bio-Ethics, School of Biosciences, University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington Campus, LE12 5RD Loughborough, United Kingdom, phone + 44 115 9516303, fax + 44 115 9516299, e-mail: [ben.mepham@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:ben.mepham@nottingham.ac.uk)

Cees Veerman, Executive Board of Wageningen University and Research Centre, Costerweg 50, 6701 BH Wageningen, The Netherlands, e-mail: [wilma.wessels@cv.cvb.wag-ur.nl](mailto:wilma.wessels@cv.cvb.wag-ur.nl)

## Newsletter

The Newsletter of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe) is published quarterly. The Spring Issue is published and mailed in March, the Summer Issue in June, the Fall Issue in September, and the Winter Issue in December. Requests for subscriptions and address changes should be sent to the EurSafe Secretariat (e-mail:

[eursafe@theo.uu.nl](mailto:eursafe@theo.uu.nl)). Items for inclusion in the EurSafe Newsletter should be sent to chief-editor Volkert Beekman ([v.beekman@lei.wag-ur.nl](mailto:v.beekman@lei.wag-ur.nl)). The deadlines for the next two issues of the EurSafe Newsletter are:

- Volume 4, No.4 – November 15, 2002
- Volume 5, No.1 – February 15, 2003

## Editors

- Volkert Beekman* Centre for Methodical Ethics & Technology Assessment (META), Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI), P.O. Box 29703, 2502 LS The Hague, The Netherlands, phone + 31 70 3358147, fax + 31 70 3615624, e-mail: [v.beekman@lei.wag-ur.nl](mailto:v.beekman@lei.wag-ur.nl)
- Kate Millar* Centre for Applied Bioethics, School of Biosciences, University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington Campus, Leicester LE12 5RD, United Kingdom, phone: + 44 115 9514182, fax: + 44 115 9514320, e-mail: [kate.millar@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:kate.millar@nottingham.ac.uk)
- Silke Schicktanz* Max-Delbruech Centre for Molecular Medicine (MDC), Robert-Roessle-Str. 10, 13125 Berlin-Buch, Germany, e-mail: [schicktanz@mdc-berlin.de](mailto:schicktanz@mdc-berlin.de)
- Geir Tveit* Centre for Bioethics and Risk Assessment, The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Groennegaardsvej 8, 18770 Frederiksberg Copenhagen, Denmark, phone + 45 3528 3001, fax + 45 3528 3022, e-mail: [get@kvl.dk](mailto:get@kvl.dk)

# Application Form

## Membership of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe)

Family Name  
Given Name  
Title  
Organisation  
Address  
Country  
Phone  
E-mail

Fax

### I would like to apply for membership:

- |                          |   |          |
|--------------------------|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Individual membership   | Euro 25  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Individual membership with subscription to the<br><i>Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics</i> | Euro 50  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Institutional membership  | Euro 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I would like to receive the newsletter by mail  |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I would like to receive the newsletter by e-mail  |          |

### Options for payment: A or B

**A:** Please charge my VISA/Mastercard/Eurocard/  
(mark as appropriate) Account No:

\*\*\*\*\* \*\*

- if MasterCard please also use the CVC code on the backside: \*\*\*\*\* \*\*

Valid from ... .. Until end ... .. Amount Euro

Name on card

Address

Signature of cardholder

Date

**B:** Subscription fee can also be transferred to Utrecht University bedrijf 002, European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics, EurSafe, Dutch Postbank 104185

### Please return this form to:

European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics, EurSafe  
Centre for Bioethics and Health Law  
P.O. Box 80105, 3508 TC Utrecht, The Netherlands  
Fax + 31 30 2539410