

European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe)

Newsletter

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Volume 2, No. 3

September 2000
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Editorial

The summer may have slowly faded away but many of us are still aglow from the 'sunshine' that was the Second Congress of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics held at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College (KVL), Copenhagen. The conference was a great success with 150 participants from 22 countries and a programme of 61 scientific contributions. To all those who worked so hard to ensure the meeting was as well organised as it was stimulating, we, the majority (who were able to sit back and enjoy the proceedings), reiterate our thanks and appreciation. For those of you unable to attend, firstly, we hope that you can join us in Florence on 3 - 5 October 2001 for the Third EurSafe Congress (see pg 2) and secondly, Gitte Mayer of KVL has submitted a short report of the proceedings of the Copenhagen congress (pg 5). Pre-prints from the conference are available from www.husdyr.kvl.dk/html/psa/eursafe.htm

Please send your contributions for the December 2000 Newsletter to Volkert Beekman at his new e-mail address (v.beekman@lei.wag-ur.nl) by December 1, 2000. We would like to thank Sandy Tomkins for her contribution as a co-editor of this issue. May we take this opportunity to encourage all readers to make full use of this forum to promote conferences, courses, research activities or just to share interesting information.

Volkert Beekman, Berit Faber, Dirk Lips, Kate Millar, Erminio Monteleone, Silke Schicktanz

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~~~~~ **First announcement** ~~~~~

**The Third Congress of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics  
(EurSafe)**

***Food Safety, Food Quality and Food Ethics***

**3 - 5 October 2001, Palazzo degli Affari, Florence, Italy**

The Organising Committee invites scientists and professionals to attend the Third Congress of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe), in Florence, 3 - 5 October 2001. The aim of the congress is to improve communication among experts in ethics, scientists and professionals of the agricultural and food sector, and to foster inter-disciplinary research and education in agriculture and food ethics. The central theme of the congress is the ethics of food production and trade with reference to consumer safety, needs and preferences.

**MAIN TOPICS**

The Florence congress will focus attention on:

- Ethics of Food Production: animal welfare, genetic engineering and environmental impacts
- Food Safety: risk assessment, management and communication
- Labelling and consumer information
- Food cultures and traditions in a globalised economy
- Ethics of (international) food trade
- Food chain management, control and traceability
- The problem of famine and starvation

**IMPORTANT DATES**

|                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| November 2000      | Call for papers / Second announcement |
| 19 May 2001        | Deadline for submission of abstracts  |
| 30 June 2001       | Authors notified of accepted papers   |
| 15 August 2001     | Final draft of papers due             |
| 3 - 5 October 2001 | EurSafe congress                      |

For information concerning the scientific programme please contact:

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

Congress web site: [www.studioscaramuzzi.com/eursafeflorence2001](http://www.studioscaramuzzi.com/eursafeflorence2001)

~~~~~ **Special announcement** ~~~~~

**SECOND MEETING OF THE DUTCH PLATFORM FOR
AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD ETHICS: ETHICS AND TRADE IN FOOD**

Friday 13 October 2000, Utrecht University, Centrumgebouw Zuid, Room F125

The topics of the meeting will be: Opportunities for European research (11.30 - 12.30) and food ethics and trade (13.00 - 17.00). More information and registration details from:

Centre for Bioethics and Health Law

Utrecht University

Heidelberglaan 2

3584 CS Utrecht

The Netherlands

CBG@theo.uu.nl or Frans Stafleu e-mail: f.r.stafleu@pobox.accu.uu.nl

Participation is free (see Conferences page 8 for further information)

~~~~~ **Special announcement** ~~~~~

**Announcing the Joint 2001 Annual Meetings of the**

**AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND HUMAN VALUES SOCIETY (AFHVS)  
and the  
ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF FOOD AND SOCIETY (ASFS )**

**Thursday, June 7 - Sunday, June 10, 2001, Humphrey Institute for  
Public Affairs Conference Center, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities**

**Local Organizing Committee**

Helene Murray (MISA, University of Minnesota), Chair; Carla Carlson (Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota); Jan O'Donnell (Executive Director, Minnesota Food Association); David Nelson (Minnesota Food Association Board Member); Carmen Fernholz (Chair, Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota), DeEtta Bilek (Coordinator, Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota), Dana Jackson (Land Stewardship Project); and Jan Joannides (Independent Consultant)

**Program Coordinators**

Frederick Buttel (University of Wisconsin) and Helene Murray (University of Minnesota)

Contributed Paper Abstracts or Proposals for Sessions/Panels are due February 16, 2001.

For additional information on local arrangement matters, contact:

Helene Murray, Local Organizing Committee Chair

Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture

University of Minnesota, 411 Borlaug Hall

St. Paul, MN 55108-1013

Phone: (612) 625-8235; fax: (612) 625-1268

[<murra021@maroon.tc.umn.edu>](mailto:murra021@maroon.tc.umn.edu)

Welcome to Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus! Minneapolis is one of the most livable large cities in North America, a delightful conference venue, an educational and food manufacturing center, a hotbed of activity and activism relating to food and agriculture, and the location of a diversity of interesting restaurants. Nearby St. Paul is the seat of state government and the site of the University of Minnesota's biological science departments and its College of Agriculture.

The 2001 joint meetings of AFHVS and ASFS will be held at the Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs Conference Center on the "WestBank" of the University of Minnesota's Minneapolis campus. The

Humphrey Institute is two blocks away from the conference hotel (the Holiday Inn Metrodome), and a half mile away from downtown Minneapolis. Inexpensive dormitory housing will also be available.

In addition to the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) and the Humphrey Institute of the University of Minnesota, the conference co-hosts include a number of prominent Twin Cities-area NGOs working in the areas of food and agriculture: the Land Stewardship Project, the Minnesota Food Association, the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy.

### **CALL FOR PAPERS AND PROPOSALS FOR SESSIONS JOINT ANNUAL MEETINGS OF AFHVS AND ASFS**

The joint annual meetings of Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society (AFHVS) and the Association for the Study of Food and Society (ASFS) will bring together two multidisciplinary professional and scholarly societies for the purpose of broadly discussing contemporary issues relating to food, eating, dietary, and nutritional behaviors; food and agricultural practices; public policies toward food and agriculture; and the history, philosophy, social institutions, and values which underlie them. Papers and panels are sought on any topic related to agriculture, food, and society, including but not limited to the following:

- ethical issues in agriculture and the food system
- foodways and food practices
- agricultural, food, fiber, and research practices and policies
- food access, food security, food safety, and food equity concerns
- agricultural sustainability and environmental quality; agricultural and food ethics
- local food systems and foodshed analysis
- the social origins and social and ethnical implications of agricultural technologies and practices
- socio-technical issues and controversies in agriculture and food (e.g., industrialization of livestock production, GMOs/biotechnology, organic food standards, precision agriculture);
- food- and agriculture-related social movements;
- the roles of scientific and indigenous knowledges in the food system;
- the current status and future prospects of the land-grant and public agricultural research system;
- regional/local food systems and urban/rural development;
- nutrition education and community nutrition;
- food and the media;
- the cultural context of food, eating behaviors, food production, and rural life;
- the global context of food production, distribution, and food activism; and food and agricultural dimensions of trade policy and the World Trade Organization.

#### **Procedures for Submitting Abstracts of Contributed Papers and Proposals for Sessions**

1. Abstracts of contributed papers and proposed sessions are due on February 16, 2001. Abstracts of contributed papers should be 350 or fewer words. Proposals for sessions should also include an abstract (<350 words) describing the session's content.
2. It is preferred that abstracts be submitted on disk (Corel Word Perfect, MS Word, or a text file) or as a file attachment by electronic mail (to <[nclarlis@factaff.wisc.edu](mailto:nclarlis@factaff.wisc.edu)>), but clean typewritten submissions are also welcome. Include your name, full address, email address, and affiliation after the paper title and before the text of the abstract. Proposals for proposed sessions, panels, and other events should include the name, affiliation, and address of the organizer and presider, and a tentative roster of participants. All material in the abstract should be prepared in upper/lower case. Accepted abstracts will be reproduced for distribution to conference participants.
3. Confirmation of acceptance of abstracts will be made by email by about March 9, 2001.
4. Send program correspondence to: Fred Buttel or Marcy Ostrom, Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, University of Wisconsin, Taylor Hall, Madison, WI 53706; phone: (608) 265-2908; fax: (608) 265-6399; email: [fbuttel@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:fbuttel@facstaff.wisc.edu) or [mrostrom@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:mrostrom@facstaff.wisc.edu)

## **EurSafe News**

### **SECOND CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD ETHICS: TWO SYSTEMS - ONE WORLD**

**24 - 26 Aug 2000, Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Copenhagen, Denmark**

#### ***Food for thought in the global village: ethics in food production and agriculture highlighted at the second interdisciplinary international congress***

*Gitte Mayer, Journalist, Centre for Bioethics and Risk Assessment, The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Copenhagen, Copenhagen*

"You will not find one foreign consumer who demands genetically modified food, but many consumers denounce it completely. Either we listen to this or we lose our markets."

The director of the American Corn Growers Association - who have about 14,000 members in USA - made this statement in a speech in Copenhagen on the 25 August. Goldberg participated in a congress where the main topics were ethics in agriculture and food production. The congress took place at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University from 24 - 26 August 2000. He spoke words of apology to the consumers in Europe who take a critical stand towards genetically modified food. This included his denouncement of – as it was phrased by Goldberg – "the arrogant attempts of the American authorities to force unwanted products down the throat of the rest of the world." – "But we are getting the message", he declared: "the percentage of genetically modified maize grown in USA has fallen from 32% to 24% since last year".

"The customer is always right" was the credo of Gary Goldberg. However he did not only speak from a commercial point of view. The other main theme of his speech was his increasing uneasiness over the tendency of monopolisation in trade. "Do we want to see a handful of firms control the production of seed" he asked and made it quite clear that he was hoping for the day to come where consumers and farmers would unite their forces against monopolisation.

This surprisingly strong statement was made at a congress where one of the main goals was to give science and the practical world of agriculture a possibility to meet. The congress was meant to be the meeting point where representatives of gene technology and ecology could discuss and debate.

The majority of the 150 participants were sociologists, philosophers and biologists but one could also find representatives from farming. Apart from the American maize growers you would also find representatives from Monsanto and from the Danish environmental movement NOAH.

#### **"Share your visions"**

One of the invited speakers of the congress, Paul Thompson of the Department of Philosophy, Purdue University, USA, was surprised to learn that European resistance towards GMO's and preferences for organic farming not only spring from fear of hazards towards health and environment but is rooted in a broader concern for "the good life and the good food". On the other hand Paul Thompson was able to enlighten the European participants by sharing some information on what underlying thoughts and ideals are shared in USA regarding these issues.

Paul Thompson described a view of society that is to be found running as an under-current in the American political debate today. This view of society goes back to the time of Thomas Jefferson and the very early days of the United States of America.

The underlying idea is that farmers are the best type of citizens in American society and the small farm unit is the best frame of moral development for the individual human being. This view encompasses the rejection of all things big – from big seed producers to strong governments.

Thompson underlined that his aim was only to describe not to promote this view of society. At the same time however he added that this view holds the seed of a critical philosophy, where farming and food production are understood as the framework for fraternity and not only as a production unit.

"If the reactions from the consumers of Europe spring from visions of the good life and of the creation of another order of society we need to know more about this in USA because this is not known to us", Thompson said after his speech.

That ethical deliberations will always have a decisive influence on how food-stuffs and agriculture is viewed was no surprise to John Hodges, former consultant in FAO and another of the invited speakers of the congress. He described the mutual interdependence that has been essential for agriculture and the production of food from the beginning of history:

"The concept of ethics is basic to all human relations. It is not an extra trimming that you can add or take away according to your own pleasure", he said.

The mutual interdependence has long ago been lifted from the local to the global village. Old village-communities were characterised by the fact that you took care of growing the food and took care of developing a mutual code of ethics. We are equally mutually interdependent in the global village. The challenges of new technologies are world wide, but the focus on the debate of ethical questions has not taken the leap to the global village as well.

### **Ethics into trade agreements**

In her opening speech, Ritt Bjerregaard, the Danish minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries declared it essential, that ethical deliberations should be built into international trade agreements and into the agricultural policy of the EU. The minister also stressed the importance of scientists taking an interdisciplinary approach in research concerning agriculture and ethics.

The majority of approximately 50 speeches in the parallel sessions voiced the opinion that ethical questions can only be taken into account if agriculture and food production is viewed upon as something more and beyond mere industrial production where the sole demand is for the highest and the cheapest production-rate.

It was stressed that we need to supplement economical values with social and cultural. We need to look upon people as citizens and not only as consumers. We need to prioritise animal welfare and not only animal health. We need to evaluate both the benefits and the risks of new technologies. We need to look upon biological diversity as a concept not only encompassing species, but also ecosystems, landscapes and human civilisations. We need agricultural education to focus on cultural values rather than a merely technical approach. We need international regulation to move from mere trade agreements to a regulation with a much broader international and interdisciplinary focus.

EurSafe – The European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics – hosted the congress which was arranged by The Centre for Bioethics and Risk Assessment in collaboration with the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Directorate for Food, Fisheries and Agro Business, The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Research Centre for Organic Farming and Centre for Organic Farming. The Congress was held at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen.

"EurSafe" was formally created at a general assembly that took place on the last day of the congress. The aim of the society is to create an international forum for research, education and debate for agricultural and food ethics. Peter Sandøe, leader of the Danish Centre for Bioethics and Risk Assessment, was elected president of the society. The other members of the board are from France, Holland, Italy, Switzerland, and Great Britain. The next EurSafe Congress will be held in Firenze from 3 - 5 October 2001.

*You can read the Book of preprints from the Congress on: [www.bioethics.kvl.dk](http://www.bioethics.kvl.dk) - look under EurSafe 2000, "Download".*

## Conferences

### September 2000

- 7 - 9 Sep **Release of GMOs in the Environment: Is it a Human Health Hazard? WHO Seminar**  
Rome, Italy. More information: [www.who.it/Emissions/GMO/gmos.htm](http://www.who.it/Emissions/GMO/gmos.htm) or e-mail: [GMOseminar@who.it](mailto:GMOseminar@who.it)
- 10 - 12 Sep **Healthy Animals 2000: Beltsville Symposium XXIV**  
Beltsville, Maryland, USA. More information: [www.bar.usda.gov/fmod/symposium/](http://www.bar.usda.gov/fmod/symposium/)
- 11 - 14 Sep **4th International Conference on Environmental Impact Assessment**  
Prague, Czech Republic. More information: <http://congress.cls.cz/iuappa2000/>
- 13 - 14 Sep **Valuing the Health Benefits of Food Safety**  
College Park, Maryland, USA. More information: [www.umass.edu/ne165/upcoming.html#Valuing the Health Benefits](http://www.umass.edu/ne165/upcoming.html#Valuing%20the%20Health%20Benefits)
- 13 - 15 Sep **Implementation and Limits of Interdisciplinarity in European Technology Assessment**  
Bad-Neuenahr-Ahrweiler, Germany. More information: [www.europaische-akademie-aw.de](http://www.europaische-akademie-aw.de) or contact Dagmar Uhl, Europäische Akademie GmbH, Wilhelmstr. 56, D-53474 Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler, phone +49 26-41973313; fax +49 -26-2641973320, e-mail: [dagmar.uhl@dlr.de](mailto:dagmar.uhl@dlr.de)
- 13 - 15 Sep **Valuing Health Benefits of Food Safety**  
University of Maryland, USA. More information: [www.umass.edune/165/upcoming.html](http://www.umass.edune/165/upcoming.html)
- 13 - 15 Sep **The First Organic Business Conference**  
Paris, France. More information, e-mail: [MvanderKuyp@unmf.com](mailto:MvanderKuyp@unmf.com)
- 15 - 17 Sep **International Food Safety and Quality Conference and Expo**  
Orlando, Florida, USA. More information: [www.ifffoodsafety.com/](http://www.ifffoodsafety.com/)
- 17 - 19 Sep **4th European Biotechnology Symposium**  
Commercial conference. Krasnapolsky Hotel, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. More information: [www.bioconferences.com](http://www.bioconferences.com)
- 22 - 23 Sep **International Conference on Biotechnology in the Global Economy: Science and the Precautionary Principle**  
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. More information: [www.cid.harvard.edu/cidbiotech/bioconfpp/home.htm](http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidbiotech/bioconfpp/home.htm) or e-mail: [Derya\\_Honca@KSG.Harvard.Edu](mailto:Derya_Honca@KSG.Harvard.Edu)
- 25 - 26 Sep **Biotechnological Inventions: Utilising Biotechnological Patents to the Full**  
Hotel D'Angleterre, Copenhagen, Denmark. More information, phone +44-20-74535492
- 27 - 29 Sep **Designing Agricultural Systems and Food Supply for a Crowded World**  
Wageningen, The Netherlands. More information: [www.lei.wag-ur.nl/agriculture/index.html](http://www.lei.wag-ur.nl/agriculture/index.html)
- 27 - 30 Sep **Regulation of Genome Replication and Genome Repair. Weimar Conference of Genetics**  
Bauhaus-Universität, Weimar, Germany. More information: [www.uni-giessen/gtg/weimar2000.htm](http://www.uni-giessen/gtg/weimar2000.htm)

**28 Sep**            ***Detection of GMOs in Food (Workshop)***  
Chipping Campden, UK. More information: [www.campden.co.uk](http://www.campden.co.uk) or e-mail:  
[training@campden.co.uk](mailto:training@campden.co.uk)

**28 Sep**            ***Animal Welfare in the Stable***  
2000, Wien, Austria. More information: [www.freiland.or.at](http://www.freiland.or.at)

## **October - December 2000**

**4 - 5 Oct**            ***2000 IFST Annual Conference***  
NEC, Birmingham, UK in conjunction with the Food Tech Exhibition.  
The first day will deal with Food Law Enforcement. The Food Standards Agency and food safety issues will be covered on the second day, when the Keynote Address will be given by Sir John Krebs, Food Standards Agency Chairman. More information: [www.ifst.org/annconf.htm](http://www.ifst.org/annconf.htm)

**4 - 6 Oct**            ***"Alles im Griff". Workshop on Technology, Public Responsibility and Risk***  
University of Ilmenau, Germany. More information: [www.iwk2000.tu.ilmen.de/iwk2000/](http://www.iwk2000.tu.ilmen.de/iwk2000/)

**8 - 10 Oct**            ***National Biotechnology Education Symposium***  
2000, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, USA  
Preliminary schedule includes: The Next Biotechnology Products; How Will Educators Deal With New Biotech Products; Lessons Learned; Understanding Resistance to Biotechnology; How will Educators Accommodate Differing Viewpoints; Interactive Workshops; Models for Youth and Adult Education; The Challenges of Training Future Biotechnology Educators; How Will Institutions Meet the Challenge; Launching a Biotechnology Education Program  
More information: [www.biotech.iastate.edu/symposium\\_oct2000.html](http://www.biotech.iastate.edu/symposium_oct2000.html)

**9 - 11 Oct**            ***8th International Symposium on Animal, Agricultural and Food Processing Waste (ISAAPW)***  
Des Moines, Iowa. More information: <http://asae.org/meetings/trio00/>

**11 - 12 Oct**            ***Innovative Medicine: Congress and Commercial Conference***  
Nürnberg Congress Center, Germany. More information: [www.medizin-innovativ.de](http://www.medizin-innovativ.de)

**11 - 13 Oct**            ***2nd NSF International Conference on Food Safety. Preventing Foodborne Illness Through Science and Education***  
Savannah, Georgia, USA. More information: [www.nsf.org/conference/food2000/](http://www.nsf.org/conference/food2000/)

**13 Oct**                ***Ethics and Trade in Food***  
Dutch Platform for Agricultural and Food Ethics, Utrecht, The Netherlands  
Speakers: David Rosenberg (Ahold), Jeroen Brodewijk (Unilever), Marielle Matthee (Asser Instituut) *et al.* Chair: Bart Gremmen (Bio-Ethics and Technology Assessment Center, Wageningen UR). Programme: Pieter Peek (Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries) on the possibilities of the EU Fifth Framework Programme  
Workshops on cultural pluralism and trade, WTO and EU, the local and the global  
More information: Frans Stafleu, e-mail: [f.r.stafleu@pobox.accu.uu.nl](mailto:f.r.stafleu@pobox.accu.uu.nl)

(see special announcement page 3 for more details)

- 16 - 17 Oct ***Raising Agricultural Productivity in the Tropics: Biophysical Challenges for Technology and Policy***  
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. More information: [www.cid.harvard.edu/cidbiotech/ag/](http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidbiotech/ag/)
- 16 - 21 Oct ***3rd International Conference on Transgenic Animals***  
Beijing, China. More information: [www.cicst.org.cn/icta/](http://www.cicst.org.cn/icta/)
- 17 - 20 Oct ***34th International Congress of the International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE)***  
Florianópolis, Brazil. More information: [www.cca.ufsc.br/isae2000](http://www.cca.ufsc.br/isae2000)
- 19 - 20 Oct ***Food Safety in Europe***  
London, England, UK. More information: [www.foodsafetyeurope.com/home.html](http://www.foodsafetyeurope.com/home.html)
- 23 - 24 Oct ***Towards Sustainable Product Design***  
Stuttgart Design Center, Germany. Organisation: Centre for Sustainable Design. More information: [www.ddh.nl/duurzaam/nieuws/2000](http://www.ddh.nl/duurzaam/nieuws/2000) or e-mail Prof. Martin Charter, [mcharter@surrart.ac.uk](mailto:mcharter@surrart.ac.uk)
- 28 Oct - 3 Nov ***Bioethics, Health and Environment: the Public in Policy***  
Tsukuba, Japan. More information: [www.biol.tsukuba.ac.jp/~macer/bhe.html](http://www.biol.tsukuba.ac.jp/~macer/bhe.html) or contact Prof Darryl Macer, Institute of Biological Sciences, University of Tsukuba, e-mail: [macer@biol.tsukuba.ac.jp](mailto:macer@biol.tsukuba.ac.jp)
- 31 Oct - 3 Nov ***3rd World Fisheries Congress - Feeding the World With Fish: the Balance Between Production and Environment***  
Beijing, China. More information: [www.fisheries.moa.gov.cn/](http://www.fisheries.moa.gov.cn/)
- 2 - 3 Nov ***Therapeutics Application of Human Stem and Precursor Cells Symposium***  
Hannover, Germany. More information: [www.hannover/hcc](http://www.hannover/hcc) or contact Andre Othmer, University of Hannover, Lange Laube 32, D- 30159 Hannover, phone +49-511-76219107, fax +49-511-7625686, e-mail: [A.Othmer@mbox.zew.uni-hannover.de](mailto:A.Othmer@mbox.zew.uni-hannover.de)
- 12 - 16 Nov ***Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry 21st Annual Meeting - Environmental Science in the 21st Century: Paradigms, Opportunities and Challenges***  
Nashville, Tennessee, USA. More information: [www.setac.org/nashvle.html](http://www.setac.org/nashvle.html)
- 1 - 3 Dec ***6th Central and Eastern European Conference on International and Regional Cooperation for Safety in Biotechnology***  
Organised by the Czech Ministry of Environment. More information: [www.env.cz/env.nsf/pages/indexE](http://www.env.cz/env.nsf/pages/indexE)
- 4 - 5 Dec ***Food Safety Objectives: Public Health, HACCP and Science***  
Washington DC, USA. More information: [www.elsevier.nl/homepage/sag/fso/](http://www.elsevier.nl/homepage/sag/fso/)
- 17 - 20 Dec ***Functional Food, Nutrition and Health in the New Millennium. 8th World Congress on Clinical Nutrition***  
Phitsanulok, Thailand. More information: e-mail [8wccn@nu.ac.th](mailto:8wccn@nu.ac.th)

## January - March 2001

- 15 - 16 Feb ***Sustainability – Measurements***  
Evangelische Akademie Tutzingen, Germany. More information: [www.ev-akademie-tutzingen.de](http://www.ev-akademie-tutzingen.de)

## April - June 2001

- 22 - 27 Apr**      ***11th World Congress of Food Science and Technology***  
Seoul, Korea. Deadline for abstract submissions is Sep 2000 More information:  
[www.congress2001.or.kr](http://www.congress2001.or.kr) or e-mail: [congress2001@seoul.kosfost.or.kr](mailto:congress2001@seoul.kosfost.or.kr)
- 24 - 27 May**      ***Medicine and Conscience. Internal Congress of the IPPNW***  
Erlangen, Germany. More information: Stefan Kolb, IPPNW, Fichtetr. 39  
D-91054 Erlangen, phone +49-9131-816830, fax +49-9131-22339, e-mail:  
[medigew@aol.com](mailto:medigew@aol.com)
- 7 - 10 Jun**      ***Joint 2001 Annual Meetings of the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society (AFHVS) and the Association for the Study of Food and Society (ASFS)***  
Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs Conference Center, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. More information: Helene Murray, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, University of Minnesota, 411 Borlaug Hall, St. Paul, MN 55108-1013, phone: (612) 625-8235; fax: (612) 625-1268 or e-mail: [murra021@maroon.tc.umn.edu](mailto:murra021@maroon.tc.umn.edu) (see Special Announcement page 3 for more details)

## July - September 2001

- 13 - 15 Sep**      ***9th International Conference on Human-Animal Interaction***  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. More information: [www.iahaio.org](http://www.iahaio.org)  
or e-mail: [rio2001@i-et-e.fr](mailto:rio2001@i-et-e.fr)
- Sep / Oct**      ***Organic Meat and Milk Production from Ruminants***  
Joint BSAS and Hellenic Society of Animal Production Meeting, Athens, Greece  
The keynote papers will include: the future of the European Market for organic produce - opportunities and challenges; standards, regulations and legislation; animal health issues; human health: the quality and health implications for organic production; the impact of organic agriculture on socio-economic structures; the development of suitable farming systems and marketing and consumer awareness.  
More information, contact BSAS phone: 0131 445 4508, fax: 0131 535 3120  
or e-mail: [bsas@ed.sac.ac.uk](mailto:bsas@ed.sac.ac.uk)

## October - December 2001

- 3 - 5 Oct**      ***Food Safety, Food Quality and Food Ethics. The Third Congress of the European Society Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe)***  
2001, Palazzo degli Affari, Italy, Florence. More information: Professor 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)  
Congress web site: [www.studioscaramuzzi.com/eursafeflorence2001](http://www.studioscaramuzzi.com/eursafeflorence2001)  
(see First Announcement page 2 for more details)

## 2002

- 4 - 8 Aug**      ***4th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences***  
Boston Massachusetts, USA. More information, e-mail: [dpease@hsus.org](mailto:dpease@hsus.org)

## 2003

- 5 - 12 Jul**      ***Humankind/Nature Interaction: Past, Present and Future: XVth Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences***  
Florence, Italy. More information: [www.icaes-florence2003.com](http://www.icaes-florence2003.com), e-mail: [secretariat@icaes-florence2003.com](mailto:secretariat@icaes-florence2003.com), Prof B Chiarelli, Institute of Anthropology, University of Florence, phone +39-055-2398065; fax +39-055-283558

## Courses

### 1) Professional Courses

#### i) Animal Welfare Course

18 - 27 September 2000  
University of Cambridge, UK  
Welfare concepts, assessment, law, companion animals, farm animals

8 - 10 January 2001  
University of Birmingham, UK  
Ethics and animal use

Organised annually by Professor DM Broom and Professor DB Morton for veterinary graduates, but available to all. Places still available.

Contact: e-mail [ga207@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ga207@cam.ac.uk)  
Telephone: 00 44 1223 337697  
Fax: 00 44 1223 337610  
Website: <http://www.vet.cam.ac.uk/AWcourse.html>

#### ii) Community, Sustainability and Globalisation Course

1 - 20 October 2000  
Schumacher College, Devon, UK. Organisation : Schumacher College. Speakers : Wendell Berry, Vandana Shiva and Helena Norberg-Hodge.

Information: Hilary Nicholson, e-mail: [schumcoll@gn.apc.org](mailto:schumcoll@gn.apc.org)  
web site : [www.gn.apc.org/schumachercollege](http://www.gn.apc.org/schumachercollege)

#### iii) Management of Food Safety and Microbiological Risks (International Advanced Course)

6 - 10 November 2000  
Graduate School VLAG, Wageningen, The Netherlands.

Target group: graduates in microbiology, food science and technology, engineering, chemistry, quality assurance professionals, etc. In general anyone with an interest in improving their knowledge on the domain of food safety microbiology

For more information contact:  
Course Organisers  
Graduate School VLAG,  
PO Box 8129  
6700 EV Wageningen  
The Netherlands  
Telephone: +31 317 485108  
Fax + 31 317483342  
e-mail: [Yvonne.Smolders@staff.nutepi.wau.nl](mailto:Yvonne.Smolders@staff.nutepi.wau.nl) or [Martine.Reij@micro.fdsci.wau.nl](mailto:Martine.Reij@micro.fdsci.wau.nl)  
web site: [www.wau.nl/vlag/assur.html](http://www.wau.nl/vlag/assur.html)

## 2) Postgraduate Courses

### i) MA / Postgraduate Diploma in Food Policy (full-time or part-time)

Centre for Food Policy, Thames Valley University

Taught modules are:

- Food and Public Policy
- Political Economy of Food
- Food, Culture and Social Policy
- Food and Public Health and the Environment

For further details contact:

Dr David Barling

Centre for Food Policy

Wolfson Institute of Health Sciences

Thames Valley University

32-38 Uxbridge Road

W5 2BS

e-mail: [david.barling@tvu.ac.uk](mailto:david.barling@tvu.ac.uk) or phone: 020 82805189

[www.tvu.ac.uk/newsite/courses/coursefinder/Food\\_Policy-MAPGDip-2000.htm](http://www.tvu.ac.uk/newsite/courses/coursefinder/Food_Policy-MAPGDip-2000.htm)

### ii) MA / European Master in Global Bioethics

Faculty of Science, University of Florence, Italy

This Masters course aims to describe, explain and discuss critically, in scientific and ethical terms, the themes related to biotechnology, environment, agriculture and food production, medicine, communications, technological innovation and international production and trade in essential goods. The course approach is both inter-disciplinary and cross-cultural.

A selected presentation of personal contributions and the delivery of the Master Accreditation Certificate will take place during the Third Congress of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics in Florence. Applicants must have a laurea degree (or equivalent) in : Natural Science, Biology, Agriculture, Food Science, Veterinary, Medicine, Law, Political Sciences, Philosophy or Theology, Nursing and Social Works. Applications must be sent not later than November 15, 2000. A curriculum vitae et studiorum is requested. The University fee for registration is 1000 EURO.

Applications should be send to : Masters in Global Bioethics, Institute of Anthropology, Via del Proconsolo 12, 50122 Florence, Italy, phone + 39 55 2398065, fax + 39 55 283358, e-mail : [antropos@unifi.it](mailto:antropos@unifi.it)

## Organisations

### 1) Government

*L'Agence française de sécurité sanitaire des aliments (AFSSA)* is a key element of a new approach to public health in France, that was created as part of a series of measures introduced in mid-1998. A decree of 26 March 1999, formally created the agency. It operates under the aegis of three ministries - those charged with health, agriculture and consumer affairs. The agency has a remit that extends from primary production through to the final consumer. It is intended that the agency will give advice on each of the following: The processes and conditions of production; Food processing; Storage; Final distribution of food. More information: [www.afssa.fr/](http://www.afssa.fr/)

**Agriculture and Environment Biotechnology Commission (AEBC)** was established in June 2000 to offer the UK Government independent strategic advice on biotechnology issues. It focuses primarily on the impact of developments in biotechnology on agriculture and the environment. However, its remit covers all biotechnology issues which do not fall to the Food Standards Agency (FSA), which is the UK body responsible for food safety, including GM food, or the Human Genetics Commission (HGC) which advises on how new developments in human genetics will impact on people and health care. The AEBC will work alongside the HGC and the FSA and operate in accordance with best practice principles of transparency and openness. More information: [www.aebc.gov.uk](http://www.aebc.gov.uk)

**Australian New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA)** is a statutory authority operating under the Australia New Zealand Food Authority Act 1991. ANZFA works with a Council of Health Ministers: the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Council (ANZFSC) to develop food standards and other regulatory measures for Australia and New Zealand. Further details available at: [www.anzfa.gov.au/](http://www.anzfa.gov.au/)

**Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)** was established in 1997 to consolidate all food inspection-related resources at the federal (national) level. More information: [www.cfia-acia.ca/english/toc.html](http://www.cfia-acia.ca/english/toc.html)

**Ethics Committees in Finland** There are four major national ethics committees in Finland concerning biomedicine and research, whose functions and scope of activity are mainly based on governmental legislation:

- i) **The Board for Gene Technology** aims to ensure safe and ethically acceptable use of gene technology, and to prevent any harm gene technology may inflict on human health, animals, property or the environment. More information: Irma Saolovouri, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, PO Box 276, FIN-00171 Helsinki, Finland or e-mail: [irma.salovuori@stm.vn.fi](mailto:irma.salovuori@stm.vn.fi)
- ii) **The National Advisory Board for Biotechnology** aims to promote co-operation between authorities, research in the field and establishments concerning matters related to biotechnology and in particular to gene technology; to monitor and promote international co-operation on biotechnology; to monitor progress in biotechnology and research on biotechnology as well as its health and environmental effects; to develop and promote research, information and education in biotechnology and to promote the consideration of ethical issues in biotechnology. More information: Helena von Troil, Rikhard Nymanintie 9 B, FIN-00370, Helsinki, Finland; phone +358 405449981 or e-mail: [helena.troil@clannet.fi](mailto:helena.troil@clannet.fi)
- iii) **The National Advisory Board on Health Care Ethics (ETENE)** is concerned with ethical issues related to health care and patients status. Its purpose is to submit opinions and recommendations on ethical questions arising in health care; to give expert assistance in developing health care and the relevant legislation; to collect and distribute information on ethical health care issues and international discussions; to follow developments in health care and related technologies and their connection with ethical issues. More information: Ritva Halila, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, PO Box 276, FIN-00171, Helsinki, Finland; phone +358 91603834 or e-mail: [ritva.halila@stm.fi](mailto:ritva.halila@stm.fi)
- iv) **The National Research Ethics Council** is concerned with making proposals and issuing statements to governmental authorities on legislative and other matters relating to research ethics; contributing to resolving issues of research ethics; taking initiative in promoting research ethics and discussion on research ethics; following international development in the field and taking an active part in international co-operation, and raising awareness of research ethics in society at large. More information: Veikko Launis, Department of Philosophy, FIN-20014 University of Turku, Finland; phone +358 23336338 or e-mail: [veikko.launis@utu.fi](mailto:veikko.launis@utu.fi)

**Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)** has the mission of protecting the (Irish) consumers' health by ensuring that the food consumed, distributed, marketed and produced in Ireland meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene. The FSAI was created by Act of Parliament in July 1998, and was formally established 1 January 1999. The authority took over all the food regulatory functions previously lodged with a range of older institutions and now has powers that apply from "farm to fork". More information: [www.fsai.ie/](http://www.fsai.ie/)

**Human Genetics Commission (HGC)** is the UK Government's advisory body on how new developments in human genetics will impact on people and on health care. Its remit is to give Ministers strategic advice on the "big picture" of human genetics, with a particular focus on social and ethical issues. More information: [www.hgc.gov.uk/](http://www.hgc.gov.uk/)

**National Research Ethics Council of Finland** was established in 1991 and works under the Ministry of Education to promote research ethics and provide expert assistance in issues relating to it. More information: [www.minedu.fi/minedu/research/organisation/research\\_ethics\\_council.html](http://www.minedu.fi/minedu/research/organisation/research_ethics_council.html)

## 2) NGO and Commercial Organisations

**Australian Gene Ethics Network** is concerned with amongst other things consumer rights and labelling of genetically engineered foods; animal rights and welfare; environmental impacts of new organisms; regulation of genetic engineering etc. More information: [www.geneethics.org](http://www.geneethics.org)

**BioDemocracy and Organic Consumers Association** campaigns for food safety, organic agriculture and sustainability. The BioDemocracy Campaign is a public interest organisation dedicated to building a healthy, safe and sustainable system of food production and consumption. The Organic Consumers Association promotes food safety, organic farming and sustainable agricultural practices in the US and internationally. It provides consumers with factual information they can use to make informed food choices. More information: [www.purefood.org/](http://www.purefood.org/)

**Le Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC)**, the European Consumers' Organisation was established in 1962 and represents the concerns of 29 independent national consumer organisations from 20 European countries. BEUC's mission is to defend the interests of European consumers in the EU policy process by contributing expertise in issues that have direct economic or legal consequences for the consumer and on issues that impact on health and safety and the environment. More information: [www.beuc.org/](http://www.beuc.org/)

**Hungarian Scientific Society for Food Industry** was founded in 1949 with the aim of facilitating the application of the results of scientific research and technical developments in food processing as well as in the associated field of economy and training. In this way the Society contributes to the increase of the professional level of its members and that of food production; protects the professional, scientific and economic interests of its members and provides a forum at national and international level. More information: [www.mete.mtesz.hu/introa.htm](http://www.mete.mtesz.hu/introa.htm)

**International Association for Food Protection (IAFP)** was founded in 1911 and is a non-profit association of food safety professionals, comprising a diverse membership of over 3,000 members from 50 nations. Members work in all areas of the food protection industry, government and academia. The Association has information to offer everyone involved in food protection and public health. More information: [www.foodprotection.org/home.html](http://www.foodprotection.org/home.html)

**International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (IFPMA)** was founded in 1968. IFPMA's objectives are "to assure permanent contact among its members; promote and support continuous development throughout the pharmaceutical industry of ethical principles and practices voluntarily agreed on; contribute expertise to and co-operate with national and international organisations, governmental or non-governmental, having the same aims; deal with all questions of common interest in order to contribute to the advancement of the health and welfare of the peoples of the world". More information: [www.who.int/ina-ngo/ngo/ngo079.htm](http://www.who.int/ina-ngo/ngo/ngo079.htm)

**International Food Information Council (IFIC)** The IFIC's purpose is to bridge the gap between science and communications by collecting and disseminating scientific information on food safety, nutrition and health and by working with an extensive roster of scientific experts to help translate research into understandable and useful information for opinion leaders and ultimately, consumers. These groups find the IFIC reservoir of science and health data a valuable and easily accessed resource. More information: [ificinfo.health.org/infoific.htm](http://ificinfo.health.org/infoific.htm)

**International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST)** is a country-membership organisation and is the sole global food science and technology organisation. It is a voluntary, non-profit association of national food science organisations linking the world's best food scientists and technologists. IUFoST's main objectives:

- International co-operation and exchange of scientific and technical information among scientists, food technologists and specialists of member nations
- Supporting international progress in both theoretical and applied areas of food science
- Advancing technology in the processing, manufacturing, preservation, storage and distribution of food products
- Stimulating appropriate education and training in food science and technology
- Fostering professionalism and professional organisation among food scientists and technologists

More information: <http://Home.InfoRamp.Net/~iufost/>

**Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS)** was founded in 1969 and is an independent non-profit alliance of 50,000 concerned citizens and scientists across the USA. UCS augments rigorous scientific analysis with innovative thinking and committed citizen advocacy to build a cleaner, healthier environment and a safer world. More information [www.ucsusa.org/about/about-home.html](http://www.ucsusa.org/about/about-home.html)

### 3) Academic and Research Institutes

**Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology (SIK)** is an industrial research institute with the objective of strengthening the competitiveness of the food and biotechnology industry. SIK conducts need-oriented research and conducts confidential process and product development projects. SIK offers tailored courses for individual companies and participates in undergraduate and PhD education at universities and colleges in Gothenburg, Lund and Uppsala. More information: [www.sik.se/sik/eng/text.html](http://www.sik.se/sik/eng/text.html)

## Projects

### European Network Safety Assessment of Genetically Modified Food Crops (Entransfood)

Objectives :

- To identify key issues of the safety evaluation of genetically modified food crops, and to examine whether current research methods are adequate to characterise specific safety hazards ;
- To co-ordinate ongoing research regarding safety testing of transgenic foods in the framework of the European research programme FP5 ;
- To design new (in-vitro) test methodologies for safety and nutritional evaluation of whole complex foods ;
- To address the risks of gene transfer from genetically modified organisms to the gut microflora of humans and animals ;
- To examine new strategies for the detection of genetically modified raw materials, processed products and food ingredients ;
- To examine the fate of genetically modified raw materials and processed products throughout food production chains (tracking and tracing) ;
- To develop a communication platform of producers of GMOs, scientists involved in research and safety evaluation, retailers, regulatory authorities and consumer groups with the scope to improve safety assessment procedures, risk management strategies and risk communication.

Entransfood is subsidised by the European Commission through the 5<sup>th</sup> framework programme. Co-ordination and information : RIKILT, Dr. H.A. Kuiper or Dr. H.J.P. Marvin, P.O. Box 230, 6700 AE Wageningen, The Netherlands, phone + 31 317 475453, fax + 31 317 417717, e-mail : [entransfood@rikilt.wag-ur.nl](mailto:entransfood@rikilt.wag-ur.nl), web-site : <http://www.rikilt.wageningen-ur.nl/euprojects/entransfood.html>

## EU News and Regulatory Issues

**Assessment of the informal meeting of Environment Ministers from Agence Europe in July 2000.** You can find the Council presidency's official (and much shorter) version on <http://www.presidence-europe.fr/pfue/static/acces5.htm>; which also provides information about the *de facto* moratorium on authorisations for the marketing and dissemination into the environment of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the EU.

**Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly** (adopted on 29 July) a Resolution on biotechnology which reads in part: "calls on the member states of the European Union to request a moratorium [on the patenting of genes] in order to permit the re-negotiation of Directive 98/44/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 6 July 1998 on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions, in particular Article 5(2) thereof. This would leave the time for the necessary public discussion and the finding of an appropriate solution. In this connection, those member governments which have already brought complaints against Directive 98/44/EC before the European Court of Justice should be supported." (Source: Greenpeace)

**EU's Council of Ministers and the European Parliament on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions, the so-called 'biotech patents Directive' EC 98/44**

[http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/lif/dat/1998/en\\_398L0044.html](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/lif/dat/1998/en_398L0044.html)

Opinion No. 8 of the Group of Advisors on the Ethical Implications of Biotechnology to the European Commission

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat\\_general/sgc/ethics/oldversion/en/opinion8.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/ethics/oldversion/en/opinion8.pdf)

Further information on the Directive

[http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org/t\\_en/i/i\\_410\\_en.asp?adt\\_id=817&ads=0](http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org/t_en/i/i_410_en.asp?adt_id=817&ads=0)

**EU publishes Food Safety White Paper comments**

The European Commission announced at the end of July 2000 the publication of comments from interested parties on the Food Safety White Paper. Nearly 100 contributions were received. The comments are available on the European Commission web site and include contributions from Official EU Institutions (n=3); EU Member States (n=6); Third Countries (n=4); Food and Drink Industry (n=24); Agriculture (n=11); Retail and Distribution (n=4); Consumer Groups (n=9); Others (n=14). [www.europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/intro/wps\\_comm\\_index\\_en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/intro/wps_comm_index_en.html)

## Publications & Journals

### 1) Books and Reports

**Biotechnology and Food Safety to G8 (OECD Reports)**

The following reports have been sent as a package to the Group of Eight industrial countries and are now available on OECD's Internet site. There will be a second virtual consultation on the Internet with the NGOs who have participated in the process so that they may also comment on the results of the work.

- Report of the *OECD Task Force for the Safety of Novel Foods and Feeds* describing the consumer safety issues that are addressed by government safety assessors when they evaluate new GM foods
- *OECD Working Group for the Harmonisation of Regulatory Oversight in Biotechnology* report on environmental safety concerns associated with GM foods
- *OECD Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety* report on what is being done at the national and international level to address current and emerging food safety issues
- Summary report of the *Consultation with Non-Governmental Organisations*, November 1999. Representatives of some 50 bodies from civil society, including the scientific and business communities, focused on three topics: consumer concerns, environmental concerns and agro-food concerns

More information: [www.oecd.org/subject/biotech/index.htm](http://www.oecd.org/subject/biotech/index.htm)

***Leben - Töten - Essen: Anthropologische Dimensionen*** edited by Heike Baranzke, Franz-Theo Gottwald & Hans Werner Ingensiep (2000), Hirzel, Stuttgart.

This book provides an anthropological insight into the meaning of killing a living being for eating. The editors selected about 50 texts from ancient philosophers through to modern moral philosophers (only available in German).

### **Review of the Welfare Food Scheme (UK Department of Health)**

A sub-group of the DoH advisory body, The Committee on Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition Policy (COMA), was asked to review the nutritional benefits of the welfare milk and vitamin supplements schemes for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and children under 5. Proposals included:

- Offering other foods besides milk to pregnant women
- Offering incentives other than free cows milk to encourage breastfeeding
- Reducing the infant formula allowance by 50% after 6 months for bottle fed babies
- Extending the period during which infant formula is available to 18 months

Request for copies of the report and comments and suggestions on the proposals may be obtained from: Margaret Jackson-Roberts, tel : 020 7972 5663

## **2) Journal and Trade Publications**

The journal ***Natur und Kultur*** is published twice a year (in German) the first issue appeared in June 2000. The focus is on ecology, sustainability and economics. More information: Gesellschaft für ökologisch-nachhaltige Entwicklung, A-8963 Bad Mittendorf, Neuhofen 32, Austria, e-mail: [ses@telecom.at](mailto:ses@telecom.at)

The electronic magazine ***World of Food Science***, was launched in July 2000 by the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFOST) in partnership with the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT). The address is [www.worldfoodscience.org](http://www.worldfoodscience.org)

## **General interest**

### **Conference Report**

- i) **Impressions of the International Conference on Risk Analysis and its Role in the European Union, Brussels 18 - 19 July 2000.**

***Dr. Melanie Peters, Senior Policy Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, The Netherlands\****

#### **Risk analysis in the European Union**

This conference was organised by the European Commission on the initiative of Arpad Somogyi, head of the risk evaluation unit of the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection (DG Sanco). Risk analysis proved to be a popular subject measured by the large number of attendees, mostly scientists, government representatives, multinationals and consumer organizations. Various speakers introduced the issue of risk analysis by reflecting on general trends in societal risks in relation to human health. Different aspects of risk assessment, risk management and risk communication were addressed in the three following half-day sessions. The conference was concluded by a discussion on future trends in risk analysis and health risk strategies. The definitions used were similar to those developed within the Codex Alimentarius risk analysis concept. Yet, it proved very important for every speaker to exactly define the different terms in the framework of their talk. A suggestion to compile a glossary of terms at the European level, however, was held unworkable.

## Role of the European Food Authority

Not much was said about the future European Food Authority (EFA) which the European Commission proposed in its White paper. However, Robert Coleman, DG Sanco's new Director General said EFA was only to have a responsibility in risk assessment. Close interaction with decision-makers would be necessary though. This would on the one hand serve to further define research requests from policy makers and on the other hand be needed to translate scientific knowledge into recommendations that would be meaningful to decision makers.

This approach is similar to the interactive (and iterative) risk analysis model developed within the Codex Alimentarius. One of the speakers proposed the term **risk evaluation** for this interaction between scientists and policy makers, a substantive process, which he urged should be given careful attention (John Graham, Harvard Centre for Risk Analysis, USA; <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/>).

Fernand Sauer, director of the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMA; <http://www.eudra.org/emea.html>), which has often been mentioned as a model for the EFA, indicated that EMA's work consists mainly of risk assessment (the scientific evaluation of data for approval of human and veterinary drugs for the European market), but also of risk management and to a lesser extent risk communication. A lesson EFA already can learn from this is that the domains of risk assessors and risk managers will necessarily be overlapping (as in the risk evaluation process), but that the mandates of the different parties should be clearly defined and well distinguished.

## Open process

A number of speakers pointed out that when examining a policy issue, an open and transparent process and the involvement of the public and other interested parties ("stake holders"), is most important for acceptance of the conclusions. Often a (scientific) question is answered, but this has not solved the issue as it is perceived by other parties (e.g. biotechnology). Speakers from different backgrounds remarked that until now scientists have been working too much behind closed doors. One speaker introduced the phrase "democratic science" and stressed the importance of involving all parties and not only scientists, from the very beginning, so as to make sure that the question under consideration is defined in the right way. The role of the various parties and of scientists in particular should be made explicit (Gail Charnley, Health Risk strategies, USA). As another speaker put it, the aim should not be a "cleverly packaged message that people will buy", as in marketing, but to really understand societal needs and the concerns that people have (William Leiss, University of Calgary, Canada; <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~wleiss/index2.htm>). Such a process can only be successful when none of the parties predefines or controls the outcome. An example given was the debate on human health effects of certain chemicals in the environment, which have been shown to act as endocrine disruptors in wild life. Here the chemical industry funds research solely performed by non-industry parties.

## Different types of risk require a different approach

Ortwinn Renn of the University of Stuttgart (<http://www.ta-akademie.de/>), who was also involved in writing the Commission paper on the precautionary principle, discussed different types of risk. Risks differ as to the extent to which they can be known (how much information is available on the effects) or to the degree of ambiguity (what does a risk mean, more knowledge in this case does not lead to less ambiguity). Also, the degree of uncertainty may differ, according to whether it is possible to predict *when* an effect may occur, *how long* it will sustain, whether there will be a *delayed* response, *where* it will occur and whether *everyone* will be effected to the same extent. A further question is whether those experiencing the risk will also be the ones experiencing some benefits. On the basis of these characteristics, Renn defined six types of risk, named after figures of Greek mythology, each demanding a different approach. In this he distinguished three risk management regimes: 1. Science-based risk management (including both natural and social sciences) in those cases in which sufficient knowledge is available on key parameters. 2. Precaution-based risk management, where there is a high degree of uncertainty or ignorance. 3. Discourse-based risk management, in cases where there is no agreement on the meaning of an issue (ambiguity). Each of these strategies can be used separately or in combination and requires a different attitude of governments, producers and the public.

## Precautionary principle

Daniele Franzone, DG Environment, one of the authors of the Commission document on the precautionary principle, stressed that this is a working document, stating the European Commission's interpretation of the term and defining it within the context of the SPS and WTO agreement. There will be no follow-up document on this issue. The document will however be discussed with the Council

and Parliament. Franzone emphasised that in the Commission's view precaution only results in a ban in the last instance. Where the document speaks of balancing costs and benefits, this does not only refer to financial but also to immaterial costs to society. Differences between Common (North America and GB) and Civil law (French) traditions should also be allowed for, Franzone said, since they may be at the root of different mechanisms of checks and balances governing the respective societies. Each society necessitates different actions to keep the balance. Also Gail Charnley (USA) pointed out the disparities between the juridical system in the US and the Europe, calling for different ways of shaping the risk analysis process.

### **Stakeholders**

Iona Pratt (Health and Safety Authority, Dublin) elaborated on the various roles of stake holders in the risk analysis process. She started her discussion on risk perception wondering why this two-day meeting had only two women speakers on its program. Indeed, the future EFA may deserve greater diversity in views than fostered by middle aged male scientist experts only!!

Stakeholders were given the floor as well: Andreas Oldag, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, illustrated the role of the press. The media go for the bad news, he said, because they see themselves as being on the "check" side of society (rather than balance). Further, for news to catch the public's attention it needs to be popularised. Even so governments have a duty to communicate their actions. Whether they like it or not, they will have to compete for the public's attention in this market.

Jean Francois Mole (Danone) and Theo Spettman (Sudzucker) represented two food industry perspectives: a very proactive and a mainly reactive view with respect to consumer concerns and food safety issues and the need for legislation.

In response to the latter speaker Jim Murray, representing the European Consumer Organisation, expressed the view that self-regulation and a focus on controlling the in-company process should be complemented by (government) check-ups on final products. Governments should have access to company monitoring data and be able to sample at different stages of the processing chain. The recent accidents in the Japanese dairy industry illustrate the need for real testing even though on paper and according to HACCP and risk analysis all risks should have been managed.

### **How to continue ...**

Questions from the audience were invited after each talk, but no real debate developed. On the whole, the conference was of an informative character, showing who are involved in the discussions and how far the issue has developed within the EU. Most examples used by the speakers were from the field of toxicology (physical and chemical risks). The risk analysis concept has been used for many years in dealing with issues such as nuclear power or pesticides. Fewer examples were given from the field of (micro)biology. Scientists and food industry appeared familiar with the concept of risk analysis, some examples were given from the US and Canada on the role of risk analysis in government decision-making on food safety issues. The question remains to be answered how all this may be translated into a working principle for the future EFA, and incorporated into government decision-making in the EU.

\*As from 1-10-2000 *Consumentenbond (Dutch consumer organisation), The Netherlands* ([melaniep@euronet.nl](mailto:melaniep@euronet.nl)).

## **ii) Consumer Concerns and International Trade - The First Meeting of a Transatlantic Platform, June 15-17, 2000, Lelystad, The Netherlands**

***Volkert Beekman, Centre for Bio-ethics and Health Law, Utrecht University***

The Transatlantic Platform for Consumer Concerns and International Trade held its First Meeting in Lelystad, The Netherlands on June 15-17, 2000. The European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics (EurSafe) initiated this Platform to stimulate and facilitate a transatlantic and multidisciplinary debate on a reconciliation of sincere respect for concerns about food among consumers and further liberalisation of international trade in prospective negotiations in the WTO (World Trade Organisation).

Caren A. Wilcox (Deputy under-secretary of Agriculture for Food Safety, United States Department of Agriculture) was so kind to open the Meeting. Her inspiring introductory words set the stage for the two subsequent thought-provoking presentations. First, Lester M. Crawford (Georgetown University, United States) forcefully argued the case for an improved scientific risk assessment to abate prevailing consumer concerns about GM-food. Second, Christophe Bureau (INRA, France)

explored the outer limits of neo-classical economics to argue that consumer concerns about animal welfare cannot justify the imposition of restrictive government interventions on livestock farmers. He provokingly asked the audience: "What on earth could justify such interventions, if consumers show no willingness to pay for animal-friendly products?" Both presentations promised lively discussions in the remainder of the Meeting and already identified some of the key issues in these discussions:

- 1) The relation between scientific risk assessment and public or private decision-making about food safety;
- 2) The behavioural ambiguity in people's respective roles as citizens and consumers;
- 3) The role of civil society organisations in the establishment of representative or direct democratic procedures in international institutions.

Contrary to popular prejudice, the Meeting saw no great divide between the European and the American participants. It simply does not seem to be true that all people in Europe worry about, for instance, GM-food, whereas Americans couldn't care less. The heterogeneity of food concerns and values within each of the two continents is at least as great as between both sides of the Atlantic. However, the 'Battle of Seattle' did signal a difference between the European Union and the United States in their answer to the question of how governments should respond to this plurality of consumer concerns about food.

The 'Battle of Seattle' probably needs a double explanation. First, the international institutional arrangements of today were constructed to address the issues of yesterday; i.e. they are still the expression of the cold war order. Nowadays, these arrangements seem terribly outdated since they, for instance, quite systematically exclude full participation by developing countries, don't allow room for democratic procedures, ignore possible contributions by civil society organisations, and favour the interests of large multinational corporations. The WTO and other international organisations thus ignore that globalisation involves more than the economic unification of markets.

Second, the almost exclusive focus on food safety issues obscures that food consumption is more than finding safe and efficient ways to organise the daily human intake of nutrients. Food consumption is embedded in a wide range of socio-cultural practices and routines that shape people's daily lives. Therefore, discussions about consumer concerns should always include this socio-cultural constitution of food consumption. Why? Because, as one of the French participants nicely expressed it, "in Denmark good food is clean, whereas in France it is a little dirty".

It may not be easy to deal with the globalising threats for people's food-mediated cultural identities. However, this only adds another reason for the development of a set of criteria that should serve to protect these identities. On the other hand, why should French farmers and their communities be protected in their wish to produce and sell certain types of cheese? What's wrong with a global McDonaldisation of food cultures? How does one distinguish between sincere consumer concerns and veiled trade restrictions, when it is obvious that governments make strategic use of the precautionary principle and animal welfare standards?

The discussion about these and other issues during the First Meeting will provide the materials for drawing an extensive agenda with research topics and future activities of the Transatlantic Platform.

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### iii) UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) Open Board meetings

The FSA's Board meetings are held in public. The first three meetings were held in London and Glasgow, future meetings are planned for:

|             |                  |
|-------------|------------------|
| 21 Sep 2000 | Northern Ireland |
| 12 Oct 2000 | London           |
| 9 Nov 2000  | Wales            |
| 14 Dec 2000 | London           |
| 11 Jan 2001 | York             |
| 8 Feb 2001  | London           |
| 8 Mar 2001  | Exeter           |

Details of venues will be available closer to each meeting from [www.standards.gsi.gov.uk](http://www.standards.gsi.gov.uk) or phone 020 7972 2444.

## Web sites

### Biotechnology (general)

[www.agbiotech.net/main.asp](http://www.agbiotech.net/main.asp)

AgBiotechNet is the online service for agricultural biotechnology. It delivers an exciting range of content and provides easy access to information on subjects such as genetic engineering, in vitro culture, biosafety, intellectual property rights and other key issues in agricultural biotechnology.

[www.biosafety.hu/CEE/](http://www.biosafety.hu/CEE/)

Website for biosafety in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) This website has been developed by the Steering Committee of the UNEP "Multi-year programme for capacity building and regional cooperation on safety in biotechnology in Central and Eastern Europe" in co-operation with the participating countries.

[www.ifst.org/resource.htm](http://www.ifst.org/resource.htm)

Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST), provides links to international food-related information.

[www.nbif.org/](http://www.nbif.org/)

The National Biotechnology Information Facility (NBIF) provides access to a vast store of widely distributed biotechnology data including links to sources of biotechnology, computer and Internet news and biotechnology newsgroups available on the web.

### Ethics

[www.izew.uni-tuebingen.de/index\\_doku\\_e.html](http://www.izew.uni-tuebingen.de/index_doku_e.html)

Online Search for Literature in Ethics

The Library of the Interdepartmental Center for Ethics in the Sciences and Humanities (IZEW) at the University of Tuebingen (Germany) is online. Covering all fields of Ethics in the Sciences, the main documentation topics are foundation of ethics, ethics in medicine, ethics in the sciences (especially biotechnology and biology) and ethics and law. The library is specialising in ethics in agriculture, environmental ethics and technology assessment as well. Further documentation topics are feminist ethics and theory, economics and social sciences. The library collects mainly literature of the German speaking countries, but a good amount of English literature can be found as well. The Center is subscribing to 38 mostly English-language journals on ethics in the sciences, which are partly indexed in the database.

[www.coe.fr/oviedo/edito-e.htm](http://www.coe.fr/oviedo/edito-e.htm)

The Bioethics (Council of Europe) site provides information about the Convention signed on the 4th April 1997 in Oviedo, Spain - since renamed the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine and presents links to other relevant sites.

[www.biotech.iastate.edu/Bioethics/links.htm](http://www.biotech.iastate.edu/Bioethics/links.htm)

Bioethics at Iowa State University - links to Bioethics Resources including: Degree granting programmes; Research Centres, Institutes and Associations; Conferences; Debates and discussion on-line; Newsletters and publications; Miscellaneous sites

## **Animal welfare**

[http://europa.eu.int.comm/food/fs/aw/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int.comm/food/fs/aw/index_en.html)

Animal welfare in the European Commission, one of the main subject areas on the 'Food Safety: From the Farm to the Fork' website

## **Food Safety**

[www.ethicalconsumer.org/back.htm](http://www.ethicalconsumer.org/back.htm)

Information about GM food, ethics

[www.who.it/programmes/food\\_safety.htm](http://www.who.it/programmes/food_safety.htm) and [www.who.it/programmes/food\\_safety.htm#Links](http://www.who.it/programmes/food_safety.htm#Links)

WHO/EURO food safety programme

[www.g8kyushu-okinawa.go.jp/e/documents/commu.html](http://www.g8kyushu-okinawa.go.jp/e/documents/commu.html)

G8 COMMUNIQUÉ OKINAWA 2000, preamble available of the G8-meeting in Okinawa 2000, § 55 is about food safety and biotechnology

[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

Gateway to food safety information linking various US Government food safety web sites.

[www.agr.ca/policy/adapt/haccp/7princip.html](http://www.agr.ca/policy/adapt/haccp/7princip.html)

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). The use of HACCP is a key concept within modern food business management and is designed to set in place control systems that assure food safety by assessing the various food safety risks associated with each step in the production process.

## **GM Foods and Crops**

<http://ens.lycos.com/ens/aug2000/2000L-08-10-07.html>

U.S. EPA launches comprehensive review of Bt crops; see also: [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2000\\_register&docid=00-20174](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2000_register&docid=00-20174)

[www.netlink.de/gen/home.html](http://www.netlink.de/gen/home.html)

The Campaign to Ban Genetically Engineered Foods (Europe), provides links to many sites.

[www.thecampaign.org/](http://www.thecampaign.org/)

The Campaign to Label Genetically Engineered Foods (USA) was launched in Mar 1999 and plans "to create a national grassroots consumer campaign for the purpose of lobbying Congress and the President to pass legislation that will require the labelling of genetically engineered foods in the US".

## **Miscellaneous**

[www.food\\_poverty.hea.org.uk](http://www.food_poverty.hea.org.uk)

The Food and Low Income Database and Website is a collaboration between the UK Health Education Authority and Sustain, the alliance for better food and farming, and is part of the Food Poverty Network. It offers guidance and provides detailed and accurate information about a whole range of projects and organisations that deal with issues of food and low income across the UK. Evaluation of the database and links to other related sites, including possible sources of project funding, can be found on the website or contact the Health Promotion Information Centre (HPIC), Trevelyan House, 20 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW, tel: 020 74131995; fax: 020 74131834; e-mail [hpic.enquiry@hea.org.uk](mailto:hpic.enquiry@hea.org.uk)

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## 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 subscription and address changes should be sent to the EurSafe Secretariat ([EurSafe@theo.uu.nl](mailto:EurSafe@theo.uu.nl)). Items for inclusion in the December 2000 issue of the Newsletter should be sent to Volkert Beekman ([v.beekman@lei.wag-ur.nl](mailto:v.beekman@lei.wag-ur.nl)) before December 1, 2000.

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## Newsletter Registration Form

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