



SCIENCE • FOOD • SOCIETY

Parma, 18-21 September 2018

SUPPLEMENT



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Where science meets society: Putting risk assessment in context

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Foreword for the book of abstracts for the conference

On behalf of the organising committee, I am very happy to welcome all delegates, presenters and participants to the EFSA conference 2018 – Science, Food, Society in Parma.

The chosen motto “contextualising risk assessment” sets the stage for this exciting event.

In the upcoming days, researchers, risk assessors, social scientists, risk managers and stakeholders from around the world will gather to discuss issues pertaining to the complex interplay between science, food and society. We will tackle issues such as trust in science, the new frontiers in risk assessment and the unresolved challenges which the food safety and regulatory communities face. Together, we will develop scenarios on the future of food safety in Europe and beyond.

And we'll do all this keeping into consideration the increasingly complex social and political context within which organisations like EFSA operate.

This book presents the abstracts of the conference as well as the biographies of speakers; it will serve as a useful guide to the subjects under discussion.

I hope that you will enjoy these three days in Parma!

Marta Hugas *European Food Safety Authority's Chief Scientist*

ENGAGING WITH SOCIETY

121. DecodE – An integrated approach to improve awareness and aid transition to natural additives in collaboration with the food industry

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Recent studies indicate that consumers have a higher awareness of what they eat and are paying more attention to labels to consume healthier food. For food additives, there is still a high percentage of the population that does not understand their different classes, or origin (natural or artificial), along with many misconceptions. In line with consumer's volition to reduce the consumption of processed foods and their tendency to prefer them non- or minimally processed, the DecodE project aims to help clarify the mystification of food additives, helping consumers and the general public know the differences between them, their implications on food and especially, their impact on consumer health. Furthermore, DecodE also aims at helping the gradual transition from artificial to natural preservatives and colourants, with research being carried out on both topics. This is performed in close collaboration with pastries and bakeries to help substitute the artificial additives used in these industries, and create sustainable methods of obtaining safe natural counterparts to be gradually introduced into the market, so, reducing their drawbacks, namely stability, high obtainment cost and low efficacy. All this is carried out in an integrated framework based on the cumulative knowledge of the research centre where the project is being executed, the Mountain Research Centre in Bragança, Portugal (www.cimo.ipb.pt), supported by various researchers with expertise in different topics. One of the main focuses of the project is to be open to society, hence the open data strategy, to reduce the gap between scientific data and the public's knowledge of important aspects regarding their food.

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124. Food safety communication strategy in the Basque country

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The consumer perception on Food Safety depends mostly on the ways in which the information is received. Therefore, it becomes essential to establish a communication strategy carefully planned and based on a proactive and anticipatory focus.

In every situation, during current times or crisis times, the communication strategic guidelines must be oriented to answer WHAT, WHO, WHERE and HOW it is going to be performed. So, the coordination and collaboration of governments, food producers, consumers and other stakeholders along the food chain is needed to exchange information and knowledge.

In this paper, the work performed in the Basque country to establish a collaborative and joint strategy to face Food Safety Communication is presented. The methodology used has been displayed as workshops and seminars where several tools have been developed among the risks assessors, managers and communication coordinators, previously identified.

The steps as follows:

First of all, the food safety topics have been classified according to the risk origin, food related to and the public health effects, considering that the way of facing communication is different in each case.

In a second phase, an 'internal reply note' has been designed as a tool to identify all the relevant information on the topic and to agree on a common message to communicate. That note becomes a practical and useful tool to support the management of the communication in a crisis situation.

Finally, a communication protocol for crisis situations has been developed. This protocol helps to share information and to assess the crisis in a coordinated way by the risk managers.

Overall, the Food Safety Communication Strategy in Basque Country helps to prepare a unique and common message addressed to the Basque population to guarantee their trust and credibility on the food safety information received.