IDF Elie Metchnikoff Prize 2010 winners from Finland, USA and Ireland awarded

Brussels, 9 June 2010 - The winners of the IDF Elie Metchnikoff Prize were announced at the Award Ceremony at the IDF Symposia on Science and Technology of Fermented Milk and on Microstructure of Dairy Products in Tromsö, Norway, on 9 June 2010.

The IDF Elie Metchnikoff Prize 2010 was awarded in three categories: Nutrition and health, Biotechnology and Microbiology. And the winners are…

Nutrition and health

Prof. Seppo Salminen & Prof. Erika Isolauri, Finland
Probiotics in dairy products - novel tools to fight Western life-style diseases

Their discoveries focus on probiotics and fermented milks influencing gut microbiota and its interactions in a health and nutrition promoting manner. The discoveries demonstrate that probiotic-supplemented perinatal dietary counselling could be a safe and cost-effective tool in addressing allergic, inflammatory disease and the metabolic epidemic.

Biotechnology

Prof. Todd R. Klaenhammer, USA
Industrial application of molecular genetics to food grade lactic acid bacteria

His discoveries focused on industrial application of molecular genetics to food grade lactic acid bacteria. His groups' research efforts have focused on (i) design of novel genetic strategies to provide bacteriophage resistance to dairy starter cultures; (ii) discovery and characterization of bacteriocins produced by lactic acid bacteria; and (iii) use of genomic approaches to investigate the functional properties of probiotic lactobacilli and examine the role of the dairy environment on the expression of key traits.

Microbiology

Prof. R. Paul Ross, Dr. Catherine Stanton, Prof. Gerald Fitzgerald and Prof. Colin Hill, Ireland
Mechanistic basis of LAB and probiotic functionality

The research of this group has focused on the mechanistic basis of lactic acid bacteria (LAB) and probiotic functionality. Their collaborative research has focused on exploitation and genetic improvement of LAB, ranging from applications in phage resistance and biopreservation to their incorporation and stabilisation in functional foods, to demonstration of efficacy and mechanistic studies in mammalian hosts.

“The excellent response and the high quality of submissions from countries competing for the award illustrate increasing research and development initiatives in the field of fermented milks. This very dynamic branch of the dairy industry thereby improves nutrition and health worldwide.” said Richard Doyle, IDF President.

The IDF Elie Metchnikoff Prize 2010 was created with the support of the following partners from the industry and other organizations: Yakult, Danone Research, Nestlé, Mead Johnson, DSM Food Specialties, YLFA International, Danisco, California Dairy Research Foundation and Chr. Hansen.

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Note to editors

- Judges of the Scientific Expert Jury were:
• **Prof. Michiel Kleerebezem**, Principal Scientist at NIZO Food Research and Wageningen University, The Netherlands;
• **Prof. Gregor Reid**, Human Microbiology and Probiotics, Lawson Health Research Institute and The University of Western Ontario, representing also the Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics (ISAPP), Canada;
• **Prof. Gerald W. Tannock**, Department of Microbiology & Immunology, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand;
• **Prof. James Versalovic**, Head of the Department of Pathology, Texas Children's Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas, USA; and
• **Prof. Liping Zhao**, Associate Dean of School of Life Sciences and Biotechnology and Associate Director of Shanghai Center for Systems Biomedicine, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China.

More information at http://www.idfeliemetchnikoffprize2010.com/

- Founded in 1903, The International Dairy Federation represents the dairy sector worldwide by providing the best global source of scientific expertise and knowledge in support of the development and promotion of quality milk and dairy products to deliver consumers with nutrition, health and well-being.

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