Animal Nutrition Studies

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Below is a summary of the speakers’ presentations from the conference held at the Royal College of Physicians in London, 15th November 2007.

Professor Christine Williams, University of Reading

Challenging the event, Professor Christine Williams, Dean of Life Sciences at the University of Reading, told the audience that “the challenges faced by consumers in achieving current dietary guidelines for omega-3 fatty acids, together with the longer term problem of sustainability within the food chain, are key issues for policy makers, agriculture and the food industry.”

Current Intakes of Omega-3 Fatty Acids in the UK and Options for Increase

Rachel Gibbs, University of Reading

Rachel outlined the importance of long-chain omega-3 fatty acids in human health, especially in respect to heart disease. In the UK, average omega-3 intake is 0.5g/day recommendation, and it is clear that the majority of the UK population consume less than the recommended level.

Enrichment of Poultry Meat with Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Dr Caroline Eyer, University of Reading

Dr Eyer told the audience that chickens are widely consumed in the UK, and that meat and poultry can provide up to 40% of the UK’s total omega-3 consumption. He highlighted the challenges faced by consumers in achieving current dietary guidelines for omega-3 fatty acids, together with the longer term problem of sustainability within the food chain, are key issues for policy makers, agriculture and the food industry.

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Lipgene news

Winter 2007/08

News Briefing at the Science Media Centre

UK press and broadcast journalists were invited to a press briefing on the day of the conference. Nine journalists from national newspapers and the BBC attended to hear a summary of the Lipgene project and the highlights of the animal and plant work from Prof. Johnathan Napier and Prof. Christine Williams.

Dissemination and Communication – materials available

One of the aims of Lipgene is to establish wide-ranging dissemination activities which effectively communicate the key findings of Lipgene to a range of target audiences, including Lipgene’s participants and the general public. Dissemination activities have progressed. The British Nutrition Foundation is the lead partner, with help from colleagues in Dublin and from work package leaders.

The team has continued to update the dedicated Lipgene pages on the BNF website and to ensure that all information is available on the official Lipgene site now hosted on the Trinity College Dublin servers (http://www.ucd.ie/lipg). The main Lipgene website was now hosted by Trinity College Dublin following the move of project co-ordinator Prof. Mike Gibbons and his team to University College Dublin.

Lipgene Website Update

The project is now beginning its final year. The main aim of Lipgene has been to investigate the relationship between diet fat composition and gene expression in the development of the metabolic syndrome in humans. "Upon knowledge gained from research in the areas of human nutrition, plant biotechnology, animal nutrition, economics and consumer science. Excellent progress has been made on all aspects of the multidisciplinary project and much of the experimental work is now complete. Researchers are now beginning to analyze and interpret the results, and this year some of the interim results of the Animal Nutrition and Plant Biosciences work were presented at a London conference which posed some important questions in relation to the use of genetic modification technology, and gained favorable media interest. As we write the last year of the project the results will be finalised, and we shall have a much clearer understanding of how the nature of dietary fat interacts with an individual's genetic make-up in the development of the metabolic syndromes."

Lipgene Training Event

Through the Lipgene training programme, members of the consortium have the opportunity to develop useful skills in addition to their area of expertise, and in addition to the experience and bearings gained in the day-to-day operation of the project. A training programme exists to promote this in a more formal basis in addition to the experience gained in the day-to-day operation of the project.

An update from the work packages

Human Nutrition Dietary Intervention Study

Update from Professor Helen Roche

The Human Nutrition Intervention Group of the project is well underway; we have finished the intervention phase and conducted the biochemical analysis. The results are currently being prepared, so we would welcome the findings in the scientific press early in 2008. Our greatest challenge will be integrating the gene-nutrient data, in terms of identifying the genetic determinants of dietary responsiveness and determining why non-responders exist. Indeed, since this is such a complex issue we have plans to organise a workshop in the UK which will be open to all partners. At the final consortium meeting we hope to say thank you to all partners, as all have given a huge effort to achieving this and we look forward to the fruits of our hard work.

Background

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