



PRESS RELEASE

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BIOTRACER Receives Top Marks from External Reviewers

BIOTRACER, a major project funded by the European Commission with €1 million, received the highest evaluation possible from the two external reviewers during the March review meeting held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

The annual review meeting, as required by the European Commission, took place 23-24 March 2009. Along with Work Package leaders from BIOTRACER, the EC Scientific Officer, Ciaran Mangan, Dr. Rohtraud Pichner of the Meat Science Institute in Kulmbach, Germany and Prof. Dr. Roger Stephan of the University of Zurich in Zurich, Switzerland, attended review meeting to evaluate the progress made by the EC-funded research project.

The results of the overall assessment state that 'the project has fully achieved its objectives and technical goals for the period and has even exceeded expectations'. It was rated as a 'good to excellent project', the highest rating possible.

The reviewers stated, 'Following the recommendations of the reviewers of the last year, the work on methodological questions was no more the focus of the project and the sampling in the food chains was started to create field data for close[ly] integration of the modellers into the project. This close[ly] cooperation of modellers and microbiologists is welcome and very important for the next period.'

Regarding the future of BIOTRACER, the reviewers stated, 'the consortium established a virtual traceability institute, which integrates with other EC-funded traceability projects, brings together the training and dissemination activities of BIOTRACER (within and beyond the project), ensures that these activities are integrated and coordinated and creates sustainability of the project beyond the funding period.'

The BIOTRACER Integrated Project aims to improve the identification of micro-organisms in food and animal feed. With the increasing number of members of the EU community as well as increasing import of food and feed to Europe, a standard format for tracking and tracing bio-contaminants is necessary; BIOTRACER will help develop these standards using proven technologies in novel ways.

BIOTRACER has brought together experts from microbiology and computer software development as well as food retailers to take the results forward and improve food safety throughout Europe. BIOTRACER is made up of a consortium of 46 organisations from 24 countries to tackle the problem of food and feed contamination.

The EU funds research projects in order to ensure consumer confidence in European food and to support European industry, especially small and medium sized enterprises.

The Faculty of Food Science and Engineering from the University *Dunarea de Jos* Galati (Romania) is involved in BIOTRACER through research in **Traceability of pathogens in the dairy chain**. Its task was to evaluate three methods developed for milk sample preparation to be used in quantitative determination of low numbers of *Staphylococcus aureus* in milk.

For more information, please visit www.biotracer.org, or contact

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