



Promise - A promising food-future for Europe

With increasing mobility of the people food quality and safety is getting more and more important. Across Europe food borne illness is a major component in considerations of public health. In 2006 and 2007 only at Frankfurt airport 22 tonnes of illegal imported food was confiscated. This food could be infected with pathogens which endanger the health of the European population.

The EU supported project „PROMISE“ focuses on common food safety threats and hence is protecting European consumers. Since the beginning of 2012 19 partners and food authorities from whole Europe work together to identify the entry points of illegal food imports and their threats. The overall goal of the project is also to improve and strengthen the integration, collaboration and knowledge transfer between the new and old member states of the European Union and its candidate countries. The collaborative work plan assures an exchange of expertise through regional training and dissemination actions to tackle common food safety threats. But the project also wants to integrate stakeholders such as public health, national food safety authorities, food industry and the public from the old and newer member countries in order to ensure the exploitation of research results. The coordinator of the project is Martin Wagner from the Veterinary University of Vienna, Austria. The project is financed with 3 Million Euros by the EU till 2014.

Training workshop for young researchers in Dublin

As personal contact and communication is crucial for the success of such big research projects, the team members met in Dublin (Ireland) at the end of November 2013. Besides a general Consortium meeting, a specific training workshop for young researchers and the first specific stakeholder event was organized. Young researchers from different countries, the future-scientists of tomorrow, got the possibility to take part in the technical workshop concerning novel sequencing technologies and phylogenetics. Together with experienced senior researchers they were trained on methods, techniques and practical knowledge of detecting food pathogens. Creative results were achieved for example by building bacteria cell walls and most important, networking and knowledge transfer was enforced.

First stakeholder event

In order to present the activities and results of PROMISE to a wider public like health authorities, consumer organizations and other relevant stakeholders, the host team of the Agriculture and Food Development Authority, Ireland (TEAGASC), organized the first specific stakeholder event, which was simultaneously offered as a webinar throughout Europe. More than 100 participants listened to very interesting presentations and talks on food safety issues due to pathogenic organisms, in particular *Listeria monocytogenes*. This event took place in cooperation with the annual conference of the *safefood Listeria* Knowledge Network. The key-note speech was given by the well-known *Listeria* expert Martin Wiedmann from the Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA. His talk was about practical implications of recent research on *Listeria monocytogenes*.

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