



Paris, 15 March 2019

Press release

An international scientific conference to provide an update on genomics for food safety

ANSES, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), the National Food Institute of the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) and the Republic of Korea's National Institute of Food and Drug Safety Evaluation (NIFDS) are holding an international conference on the theme "*Foodborne Pathogens & Whole Genome Sequencing: Impact on Public Health Protection*", from Tuesday 26 to Thursday 28 March 2019 in Paris. This three-day high-level scientific symposium will bring together nearly 300 international stakeholders, researchers and experts to review advances in genomic technologies in the field of food safety.

Next-generation sequencing (NGS) and high-throughput whole genome sequencing (WGS) are among the latest key technologies guiding questions on research, foodborne illness investigation and surveillance for the benefit of health risk assessment and management. Fuelled by the reduction in sequencing costs and the exceptionally rapid development of algorithmic and computational resources, the genomic revolution is fundamentally transforming laboratories' scientific practices by replacing many methodologies traditionally used in human, animal and plant health.

Four national reference institutes in food safety and risk assessment in France, Denmark, Germany and South Korea are organising an international symposium to provide an update on the impacts of whole genome sequencing approaches on food safety. Indeed, comprehensive information on micro-organism genomes helps to improve the assessment, surveillance, management and control of risks associated with foodborne infections and therefore to safeguard public health. This high-level conference will provide an overview of the latest developments in the field of WGS, in particular recent developments in the epidemiological surveillance of foodborne pathogens.

This three-day event will bring together nearly 300 researchers and experts in risk assessment and management from different countries around the world: France, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Netherlands, South Korea, United States, Canada and Singapore, as well as representatives of European institutions such as the European Commission, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

The scientific presentations will cover recent developments in NGS- & WGS-based methods used for epidemic outbreak detection, research and epidemiological surveillance. There will also be a discussion on bioinformatics analysis methods and tools for characterising foodborne pathogens and interpreting the impact of pathogen genome variations on their virulence, antimicrobial resistance and persistence. Debates will focus on the development of quantitative microbial risk assessment (QMRA) models using these new comprehensive genomic data. In addition, the issue of the potential of metagenomics in the food safety field will also be examined, with a particular focus on virology. The conference will close with round table discussions on challenges and practical measures for promoting genomic approaches to food chain surveillance and investigation at national, European and global levels.

The programme and all other information about the event can be found on the dedicated website:
<http://ptolemee.com/wgs2019/index.html>

Note that the conference will be held in English.

Follow the conference news on social networks: #FoodSafetyWGS2019

International Scientific Conference ANSES-BfR-DTUFood-NIFDS

"Foodborne Pathogens & Whole Genome Sequencing: Impact on Public Health Protection"

Tuesday 26 to Thursday 28 March 2019

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