

June 9, 2010

International Dairy Federation Elie Metchnikoff Prize 2010 winners from Finland, USA and Ireland awarded

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 Tromsø, Norway, on 9 June 2010.

The IDF Elie Metchnikoff Prize 2010 was awarded in three categories:

- 1. Nutrition and Health. Prof. Seppo Salminen and Prof. Erika Isolauri** from Finland received their award for their work on the role of probiotics delivered in dairy products as novel tools to fight Western life-style diseases. Their discoveries focus on probiotics and fermented milks influencing gut microbiota and its interactions in promoting health and nutrition. The discoveries demonstrate that probiotic-supplemented perinatal dietary counseling could be a safe and cost-effective tool in addressing allergic, inflammatory disease and the metabolic epidemic.
- 2. Biotechnology. Prof. Todd R. Klaenhammer** from the USA received the award for his pioneering research on industrial application of molecular genetics to food grade lactic acid bacteria. Dr. Klaenhammer's discoveries focused on industrial application of molecular genetics to food grade lactic acid bacteria. His group's 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.
- 3. Microbiology. Prof. R. Paul Ross, Dr. Catherine Stanton, Prof. Gerald Fitzgerald and Prof. Colin Hill**, Ireland shared the award for collaborative research on the mechanistic basis of lactic acid bacteria (LAB) and probiotic functionality. The research of this group focused on the mechanistic basis of probiotic functionality and their success in genetic improvement of LAB, ranging from applications in phage resistance and biopreservation, to their incorporation and stabilization in functional foods, to demonstration of efficacy and mechanistic studies in mammalian hosts.

For the first time in 2010, a special **Elie Metchnikoff Prize 2010 Award of Recognition** was presented to **Dr. Irene Lenoir-Wijnkoop**, Danone Research. This award was presented for Dr. Lenoir-Wijnkoop's tireless efforts over 2 decades to advance the science of probiotics through building collaboration among scientists in the probiotic field [two of her many accomplishments are championing the creation of the only scientific society dedicated to probiotics and prebiotics (International Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics) and conceiving the Metchnikoff Prize]. Her hope with the Metchnikoff Prize was to provide a mechanism to recognize outstanding achievements in probiotic research. "Irene is widely known among the

community of academic and industry scientists in probiotics as a talented scientist and leader with vision, commitment, optimism and determination to move the field forward. Often with no recognition for herself, Irene works hard to promote the science behind probiotics and prebiotics and define solutions to challenges as they emerge. No one could be more deserving of this award,” commented Todd Klaenhammer, who also serves as Vice President of ISAPP.



Award ceremony for recipients of the 2010 Elie Metchnikoff Prize. Back row (L-R): Joerg Seifert, Paul Paquin, Colin Hill, Todd Klaenhammer, Luc Morelon. Front row: Seppo Salminen, Irene Lenoir-Wijnkoop, Gregor Reid, Paul Ross and Gerald Tannock.

“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, the International Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics and Chr. Hansen.

The **Scientific Expert Jury** members 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
- 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:

<http://www.idfeliemetchnikoffprize2010.com/Public/TextFlowPage.php?ID=29>