



The International Dairy Federation News Release

EXPLORATION OF MILK GENES TO UNDERSTAND HEALTH BENEFITS OF DAIRY PRODUCTS

New scientific breakthroughs revealed at Third International Symposium on Milk Genomics and Human Health

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Visit the event website at <http://milkgenomics.fil-idf-pr.com>

Brussels, 11 September 2006 - Experts in nutrition and genetics will gather at the Third International Symposium on Milk Genomics and Human Health in Brussels (19-21 September 2006) to present new scientific breakthroughs and the potential for research and development in understanding milk and its properties using genomics.

This leading trend in dairy nutrition revolves around the scientific principle that milk is the only product that is specifically evolved under the selective pressure to provide nutrition and improve the health of mammals. Under intense Darwinian selection lactation evolved over millions of years to produce ingredients that provide infants with a greater probability of surviving to reproduction age.

The new field of Genomics provides new opportunities to understanding the role that each component plays in milk – by studying its genetic origins. The human genome is now sequenced and many other mammalian genomes are following. Those genes responsible for milk production can enlighten us as to the function of the different components in milk.

“While the first two symposia presented the potential of this approach, this year we will concentrate on the new scientific breakthroughs after three years of research. Presentations will include the extensions of these tools to the metabolomics of milk, specifically the oligosaccharides and their selective stimulation of intestinal bacteria.” said Professor Bruce German, a Symposium organizer and the Director of a milk genomics project now underway at UC Davis, which is working to co-ordinate scientific researchers around the world to study milk and its benefits in these new ways.

“The emergence of the field of genomics offers new opportunities and challenges for scientists. The amount of data and information is so large that we need to communicate effectively and develop a new way for scientists to interact electronically. In 2004 we formed the International Milk Genomics Consortium, a

corporate/academic partnership charged with creating a collaborative research environment. The IMGC's Web Portal provides scientists a means both to work with databanks that are becoming the standard information resource of modern life science and to communicate in real time around the world to share results, breakthroughs etc. During the Symposium, this year we will be discussing three new types of information from milk, and how the IMGC can work interactively to discover how milk provides its unique health properties.”

It is the first time the conference is located in Europe with many European scientists present. This gives a more European perspective on milk genomics. European initiatives on nutrition and genomics are producing the first generation of scientific research, and comparing the contrasting successes of plant-based initiatives versus milk-based initiatives is also very promising.

Christian Robert, IDF Director General said: “Supporting dairy science and technology is a key part of the IDF's mission. We hope that the information that we obtain from scientific research will allow us to take advantage of new markets and respond to increasing demands from customers for diverse product lines. I am certain that advances in scientific research will play a crucial role in shaping the future composition and production of dairy products. “

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Note to editors:

About IDF

The International Dairy Federation is the most comprehensive and authoritative source of science-based knowledge and information in support of the nutritional benefits of milk and dairy products.

Founded in 1903, IDF is the representative organisation for the dairy sector worldwide and is both a forum for discussion and exchange and a dairy information centre

To find out more please visit <http://www.fil-idf.org>

About the CDRF

The California Dairy Research Foundation is a non-profit corporation that manages the research activities of the California dairy industry in the areas of basic and applied dairy product research, nutrition and health, and dairy confidence. For information about the CDRF and the research it supports, visit www.cdrf.org.

About the IMGC

The International Milk Genomics Consortium was formed in 2004 leverage existing resources for the assembly of genetic instructions for milk molecules; link the scientific community for a better understanding of the biological values of milk; create tools for an interactive, Web data exchange; coordinate pre-competitive research to develop baseline data; and provide a foundation for the development of exclusive/competitive research. Information about the IMGC is available at www.imgconsortium.org.

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