



newsletter

BIOTRACER Project

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BIOTRACER Initiates EC Meeting of Traceability Projects

Where it all began

At our General Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, we had a plenum session with our EC Scientific Officer, Hallgeir Herikstad, and representatives from two other EC projects, Raffaello Prugger from TRACEBACK and Geraldine Duffy from PROSAFEBEEF. During this session, the idea to hold an EC-sponsored meeting of traceability projects was born. Mr. Herikstad followed through on this proposal by inviting representatives from TRACEBACK, PROSAFEBEEF, TRACE, PATHOGEN COMBAT, CHILL-ON and Σ CHAIN to a meeting in Brussels, Belgium, in September.

Opportunity for Synergy

The meeting began with an introduction from Mr. Herikstad. Each representative then made a presentation of their projects with concrete ideas for future collaboration.

After a break, the participants entered into a brainstorming session of ideas for collaboration and common activities.

Follow-up Is Key

It was clear from the meeting that many of the participants were keen to follow-up on this meeting and the ideas shared with solid offers of collaboration.

Representatives from this meeting will again meet at the University of Kent in Wey, UK, in November at the TRACEBACK General Meeting to follow-up on assignments made at the Brussels meeting. These items include a

common webpage for the traceability projects, travel grants to attend project workshops, and further discussions on a new journal for food traceability.

Future collaboration opportunities that are coming to fruition are the opening of participation to a Molecular Biology workshop offered by TRACE and a Risk Assessment workshop offered by Σ CHAIN. BIOTRACER also offered the participants of other projects travel grants to take part in BIOTRACER workshops. The idea of a broader Mobility Programme (BIOTRACER participants going to other project partners) was also shared.

These initial steps to create a 'consortia of consortium' will further the application of results from all the projects beyond the closing dates of the projects.

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Back row: Hallgeir Herikstad (EC Scientific Officer), Kieran Jordan (BIOTRACER), Vincent Baeten (TRACE), Paul Brereton (TRACE), Jeffrey Hoorfar (BIOTRACER), Solveig Bouquin (BIOTRACER)
Front row: Raffaello Prugger (TRACEBACK), Francis Butler (Σ CHAIN), Shane Ward (Σ CHAIN), Kaye Burgess (PROSAFEBEEF), Klaus Hadwiger (PATHOGEN COMBAT)
Not pictured: Christian Colmer (CHILL-ON), Mattias Kück (CHILL-ON), Jeffrey Skiby (BIOTRACER)

BIOTRACER Steering Committee Meets in Brussels



Back row: Solveig Bouquin, Monika Ehling-Schulz (Deputy Bio-Terror), Burkhard Malorny (Deputy Meat Chain), Per Häggblom (Deputy Feed Chain), Kieran Jordan, Kristina Kropil, Panos Skandamis
 Front row: Annemarie Pielaat, Martin Wagner, Jeffrey Hoorfar

The 10th Steering Committee Meeting was held in Brussels, Belgium on 25 September 2008. Below, you can find some highlights of the meeting and the decisions taken. For a full report of the meeting, you can find the meeting minutes on the e-management tool (<https://biotracer.bal-pm.eu/>).

Future Structure of BIOTRACER

The first order of business was to discuss the new structure of BIOTRACER starting in Month 31 of the project. The graphic to the right shows the adjustment of Work Packages and the shifting of work into fewer Work Packages. The Steering Committee unanimously agreed to the new structure. The new structure was based on comments from the EC Reviewers at the Prague meeting and recommendations from the International Advisory Board during the Dublin meeting. The result will create a focus on ‘full biotraceability’ in chains—Salmonella in pork, Salmonella in feed and *S. aureus* in dairy.

3rd Implementation Plan

Along with the new structure came a discussion of developing the 3rd Implementation Plan for BIOTRACER (Months 25-42). The Steering Committee agreed to use a new task template to describe the work to be done. Participants will receive the task template after the Logical Framework is drafted by Work Package Leaders in November.

New Satellite Tasks

As you are reading this newsletter, some of your colleagues are writing task descriptions for new Satellite Tasks. The Steering Committee approved the plan/timeline for new Satellite Tasks. A call for proposals was made in mid-October for the two-round process. Those proposals that cleared the first-round screening by the Steering Committee were asked to write a task description by the beginning of December. The International Advisory Board will evaluate the second-round proposals, and the Steering Committee will announce their decision in the beginning of 2009.

Demonstration Activities

The Steering Committee approved the budget framework for two demonstration activities: one for the lab-on-a-chip and *Campylobacter* in chicken, and the other for the HUGIN tool and IFR.

Sampling Plans

Martin Wagner presented the sampling plans he had received. The Steering Committee gave Martin the

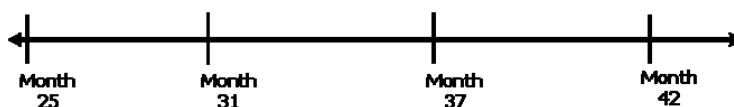
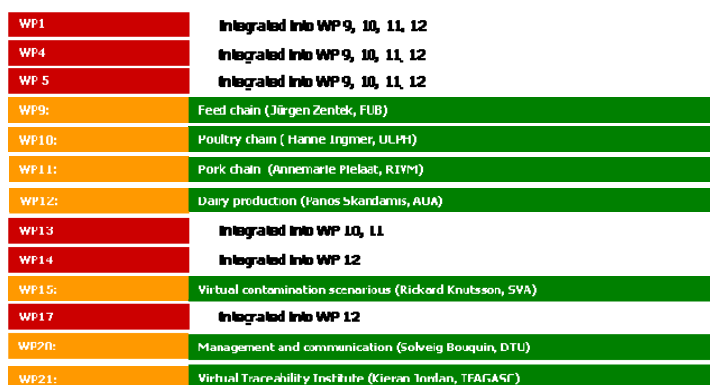
authority to finalize the sampling plans for the three chains (Salmonella in pork, Salmonella in feed and *S. aureus* in dairy). The sampling plans, which have been reviewed by appropriate modeling personnel, will be posted on the e-management tool soon.

Beyond BIOTRACER

The Steering Committee approved the use of funds to support efforts to reach beyond the BIOTRACER Consortium and build synergy with other traceability projects. BIOTRACER will offer travel grants to participants/stakeholders of other traceability projects to attend BIOTRACER workshops. BIOTRACER will also fund Mobility Programmes for BIOTRACER participants to go to partners of other traceability projects. This will be launched in 2009.

The Steering Committee is scheduled to meet again during the EC Review Meeting, 23 March 2009, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

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The above graphic shows the new structure for BIOTRACER after Month 30. This graphic was included in an email message to all BIOTRACER participants on 7 October 2008.

Research Area 2, FEED Hard Work on the Horizon

Feed Area Meeting Held in Russia

Research Area 2 held a meeting on 3 October in Pushchino, Russia. The following are highlights of the progress being made in the feed area.

Analytical Progress

Research Area 2 was able to develop new methods for the analysis of feed materials that are suitable for being used in a chain approach. RA 2 has developed new methods to purify the mycotoxins ochratoxin and aflatoxin that will allow for a more reliable and economical pre-treatment of feed samples. RA 2 participants are confident that feed safety as part of food safety will be improved by new sampling strategies and the integration of new analytical tools. As examples, we can mention the work on mycotoxins using methods such as Sol gel purification and immunoultrafiltration. Both are direct products of BIOTRACER. In the Salmonella area, the analytical tools for feed are improving as well. These improvements will result in a higher sensitivity and includes extraction procedures and molecular techniques for salmonella detection.

Sampling Strategies

We have managed to establish sampling plans in Indonesia, South Africa, and soon, in Brazil. These plans will provide the RA with a good overview on risks that are resulting from imported feedstuffs. The validation of sampling plans will allow us to give a more precise estimate about the actual contamination and variability of mycotoxin and salmonella occurrence. The validation will be completed in June 2009. This will fill a real gap in the literature and it is also very close to the practical needs.

Integration Activities

The European partners in RA 2 formed a solid framework and support for each other. There is good interplay between the universities, government laboratories and industry. I feel this is one of the major achievements in the first 18 months of the project. With the INCO partners, the RA has established close relationships and we are much more advanced now with integration. The cooperation between our partners in Indonesia, South Africa and Brazil gave us a lot of new ideas and insights into a scenario that is completely different from what we have here in Europe. For example, feed

storage and the conditions of transport are subjected to climate effects that can favour growth of moulds and toxin formation.

Additional Relations

We have taken advantage of opportunities to advertise or promote BIOTRACER activities in different circles. For example, Geert Bruggemann and myself took part in another European project (FEED SEG) meeting in Poland, we also presented a lecture on feed safety and hygiene during a conference to Polish farmers. Our efforts were appreciated by several parties, including the feed industry. With this support, we feel we will be able to provide input to future standards. Our input may also support future developments in Europe, especially new sampling protocols and the generation of new data on salmonella occurrence in farms that are currently being discussed by EFSA and other groups.

We are looking forward to the challenges ahead and the future collaboration with our stakeholders.

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Jürgen Zentek is a Professor at Institut für Tierernährung, Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) and Work Package 9 leader.



Per Häggblom is a Professor at the National Veterinary Institute (SVA) in Sweden.



Gunnar Andersson is a Scientist from the National Veterinary Institute (SVA) in Sweden.



Charlotta Löfström is a Research Scientist at the National Food Institute (FOOD DTU) in Denmark.

Dairy Chain Is Healthy

Kieran Jordan of TEAGASC attended the Dairy Chain meeting held 6—7 November in Valencia, Spain, and he submitted the following report on the meeting from his perspective.

Following the Dairy Chain meeting, I am happier about the progress of the chain.

Good integration between the modellers and data generators is happening. For *S. aureus*, the sampling plan for milk and raw milk cheese chains has been developed along with

IFR. I am also gathering milk chain data requested by IFR. For *L. monocytogenes*, CNIEL has most parts of a domain model and we are in collaboration with them on how to perform experiments to fill data gaps in the model. We also have plans to discuss the modelling of occurrence data.

We also have plans for strain characterisation of *L. monocytogenes* isolates and persistence studies.

There have been 2—3 publications from this area,

with several submitted and more are being prepared.

With regard to improving European food safety, we have some work to do yet. Gary Barker (IFR) has had discussions with stakeholders. I see 2009 as continuing with development work, but also building up stakeholder contacts and interest. We will need to put in a lot more effort to stakeholder involvement in 2010. But if we continue on this productive path, we will have more to offer!

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BIOTRACER Project



Kieran Jordan is the Industry, Training and Demonstration leader from TEAGASC in Ireland.

Acknowledge BIOTRACER

Participants are reminded to acknowledge BIOTRACER in your submitted research papers. You may use the following acknowledgment:

The work was supported by the European Union-funded Integrated Project BIOTRACER (contract 036272) under the 6th RTD Framework.



BIOTRACER Dissemination Conference and General Meeting 23—26 June 2009 Berlin, Germany

It may seem early, but the Project Office is already planning our next big event for BIOTRACER. So mark your calendars for 23—26 June 2009! The four-day event includes two days dedicated to workshops and two days dedicated to BIOTRACER business. Like with previous General Meetings, we will hold a poster session with prizes given to the best posters. A new feature of the meeting will be a publication prize. Details about the meeting will be released in early 2009.

In conjunction with this meeting, 'Biotraceability in the food and feed chain—a PhD module' will be held. This course offers PhD students four ECTS points. There is additional information about this course at www.biotracer.org.

Mark Your Calendars!

- RA 5 Meeting, 3—4 November 2008, Rome, Italy
- RA 4 Meeting, 6—7 November 2008, Valencia, Spain
- RA 3 Meeting, 11—12 November 2008, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2nd EC Review Meeting, 24—25 March 2009, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Dissemination Conference/General Meeting, 23—26 June 2009, Berlin, Germany
- BIOTRACER Ph.D. course, 24—25 June 2009, Berlin, Germany

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