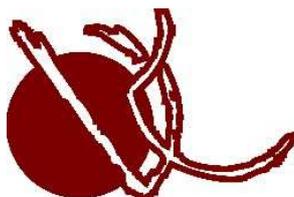


EurSafe News

European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics



EurSafe News
Volume 8, No. 3
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Editorial

At the sixth congress of EurSafe (Oslo, June 2006) I was happy that seven eager, regionally diverse people of both sexes were willing to become the new editorial board of EurSafe News. Now I am even happier to announce that these seven people have chosen Stefan Aerts as their chief-editor until the seventh congress of EurSafe (Vienna, autumn 2007) and that they will deliver four thematic issues of EurSafe News until that congress:

<i>Number</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Issue editor</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
December 2006	Animal ethics	Stefan Aerts	November 15, 2006
March 2007	Communicating food ethics	Tassos Michalopoulos	February 15, 2007
June 2007	Agricultural and food ethics in German-speaking Europe	Herwig Grimm	May 15, 2007
September 2007	Food safety and security	Matias Pasquali	August 15, 2007

Thematic or other contributions for any of these issues of EurSafe News can be sent to Stefan Aerts at stefan.aerts@biw.kuleuven.be.

Volkert Beekman
Guest issue editor

The Executive Committee of EurSafe wishes to thank Geir Tveit for all the time and effort he put as Editor-in-chief in his work for the editorial board of EurSafe News, making it the interesting newsletter

it is. At the same time, the Executive Board welcomes Stefan Aerts as his successor, wishing him and the other (new) members in the editorial board good luck and an enjoyable time.

Current affairs

Food security, food aid and genetically modified crops

Food security constitutes a hot political issue and has been topping the agenda in a series of international meetings during the last decades. The right to food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of an individual is dealt in theory as a fundamental right. Numeric evidence however is disappointing. More than one billion people are facing a precarious food security situation while 90% of them reside in developing countries.

The use of genetic engineering in agriculture and the consequent production of genetically modified crops for commercial use have released a worldwide controversy. Defenders of the new technology claim that the use of modern biotechnology will lead to an increase of productivity in agriculture, combating thus food insecurity. They are also drawing semantic parallels invoking the Green revolution, despite the fact that the most valuable lesson the earlier agricultural revolution taught us is that as long as the agricultural research is not focusing on the needs and the actual conditions of the developing countries, the adoption of new technologies not only cannot guarantee the solution of the existing problems but it may also deepen the inequalities in given geographical areas.

International food aid, initiated in 1954, is the most known instrument used in the effort to combat food insecurity worldwide. Relief or Emergency Food Aid

has recently become the major form of food aid. It is mainly distributed by the World Food Programme (WFP), a United Nations body based in Rome, while national governments provide the food aid, in particular the United States, the largest provider of food aid in the world. The 1999 Food Aid Convention recognises that food aid should be bought from the most cost effective source, be culturally acceptable and if possible purchased locally so that regional markets are stimulated. Cash is widely acknowledged to be the most effective form of food aid.

In June 2002, the Zambian government for the first time formally declared its decision to reject genetically modified food aid in view of the current scientific uncertainty surrounding the issue. Reactions by the U.S. authorities representing the donor country and the pro biotech sector in general were instant stating that African leaders who rejected genetically engineered food aid from the U.S. should be tried for the highest crimes against humanity in the highest courts of the world and wondering if they are going to accept responsibility for the people that will die as a result of the refusal of GM aid. Since the ban on genetically modified varieties imposed by the Zambian government, several problems rose as food imports did not always follow the regulations.

Food aid programs, initiated at a

time when protectionist policies in developed countries generated large surpluses of cereals, have historically been used inappropriately for the disposal of these surpluses and the creation of food dependencies. In addition, food aid has also been used in order to serve political priorities. It seems that food aid programs nowadays are also used in order to introduce genetically modified varieties in reluctant countries and put pressure on

international bodies in order to surpass their objections. The pro-biotech sector's effort to convince that those opposing to biotechnology are to bear the moral responsibility for the physical extinction of millions of people in the developing world requires a great deal of cynicism.

Asterios Tsioumanis
University of Ioannina, Greece

Conferences & courses

Autumn 2006

Oct 8-11

Research for the farm of the future: 4th Horizons in livestock sciences conference (Queensland, Australia). See: www.csiro.au/csiro/content/event/pe2q,..html

Oct 9-12

Defining roles and responsibilities. OIE global conference on aquatic animal health (Bergen, Norway). See: www.oie.int/eng/Norway2/home.htm

Oct 10

From Green to Gene Revolution? 78th International Conference on Agriculture and Development (Wageningen, Netherlands). See: www.klv.nl/ICAD/ICAD_2006/introICAD.html

Oct 16-18

Investing in research and innovation - Exchanging European experiences in a Nordic context (Copenhagen, Denmark). See: <https://www.welcomehome.dk/Default.aspx?ID=731>

Oct 16-20

International control of foot-and-mouth disease: Tools, trends and perspectives (Eilat, Israel). See: www.fao.org/ag/againfo/commissions/en/ufmd/eufmd.html

Oct 18

Ethics and animal biotechnology: How do we plan for the future? (Washington DC, USA). See: <http://pewagbiotech.org/events/1018/>

Oct 25-26

Nano- and microtechnologies in the food and health food industries (Amsterdam, The Netherlands). See: www.nano.org.uk/conferences/food_health/

Oct 25-26

International food and health innovation conference 2006 (Malmo, Sweden). Facing the diet challenge: the role of new food concepts - possibilities and challenges for science, industry and government. See: <http://62.65.12.138/ifhic2006/html/index.html>

Nov 2

Building a knowledge base for collaboration in farming and food (London, United Kingdom). See: www.effp.com/StellentEFFPLIVE/groups/public/documents/latest_news/researchconference-ia44a40741.hcsp

Nov 3-4

7th EMBL/EMBO science & society conference - Genes, brain/mind and behaviour. (Heidelberg, Germany). See: www.embl.org/aboutus/sciencesociety/conferences/2006/scope06.html

Nov 14

Avian disease, diagnosis and treatment (London, UK). European Scientific Conferences (EuroSciCon) Life Science Events. See: www.regonline.co.uk/eventinfo.asp?eventid=25478

Nov 15-16

UK national farm management conference: 'The challenge of tomorrow - Bring it on!' (Hampshire, UK). See: www.rdg.ac.uk/iagrm/conference/index.html

Nov 16-17

NanoBiotech world congress (Boston, United States). See: www.selectbiosciences.com/conferences/nanobiotech2006/

Nov 20-21

GM crops and foods authorisation: Co-existence, economic impacts (Frankfurt-Mörfelden, Germany). 3rd international conference of die Akademie Fresenius, Dortmund. See: www.akademie-fresenius.de/newframeset.php?MainTopic=Veranstaltungen&Topic=lebensmitt&Content=AktuelleVeranstaltungen

Nov 24

Animal health in the post-genomics era (London, UK). European Scientific Conferences (EuroSciCon) Life Science

Events. See:

www.regonline.co.uk/eventinfo.asp?eventid=25479

Dec 1-3

2006 ORI Research conference on research integrity (Tampa FL, USA). See: <http://ori.hhs.gov/research/extra/rcri.html>

Dec 6-8

Aquaculture is agriculture farming the waters. NACE 2006 (Connecticut, USA). See: www.northeastaquaculture.org/index.htm

Dec 15-18

Ecological sustainability and human well-being. ISEE 2006 (New Delhi, India). 9th biennial conference of the International Society for Ecological Economics (ISEE). See: www.isee2006.com/index.php

Winter 2007

Jan 17-19

Annual conference of the Philosophical Society of Southern Africa (Stellenbosch, South Africa). The conference will be hosted by the Department of Philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch. More information: vroodt@sun.ac.za.

Feb 4-9

Regional workshop principles of biosafety research for the release of genetically engineered crops (Khartoum, Sudan). More information: elgaali@hotmail.com

Mar 7

Seventh Framework Programme 2007-2013 (FP7) launch event - Today is the future (Brussels, Belgium). See: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/events/>

March 11-16

International advanced course - Strategic communication & Applied ethics in nanobiotechnology (Oxford, UK). See: www.nanobio-raise.org

Spring 2007

Apr 2-4

2007 BSAS annual conference (Southport, UK). See:

www.bsas.org.uk/Meetings_&_Workshops/

May 7-12

ECPR Workshop on social justice: Ideal theory, non-ideal circumstances (Helsinki, Finland). See:

www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/jointsessions/helsinki/Helsinki-academic-programme.pdf

May 9-11

International symposium on functional foods in Europe – International developments in science and health claims (Malta). See:

<http://europe.ilsa.org/events/upcoming/functionalfoods.htm>

May 14-18

ICGEB Biosafety. Workshop introduction to risk assessment for the deliberate release of GMOs: Assisting decision-making in a biosafety framework (Ca' Tron di Roncade, Italy). See:

www.icgeb.org/MEETINGS/CRS07/BSF1_2007_Final.pdf

May 30 - Jun 3

Changing ecologies of food and agriculture: Building on 20 years of scholarship
Joint 2007 annual meetings of AFHVS and ASFS (Victoria, British Columbia). See:

www.afhvs.org/2007call.html

Jun 12-13

3rd Annual obesity Europe conference (Brussels, Belgium). See:

www.epsilonevents.com/eps_current_event.asp?id=30&type=current

Jun 16-19

ESHG 2007. European Human Genetics Conference (Nice, France). European

Society of Human Genetics. See:

www.eshg.org/eshg2007/

Summer 2007

Jul 8-12

American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) annual meeting (San Antonio, Texas, United States). See:

www.asas.org/future.asp

Jul 30 - Aug 3

Applying ethology to animal and ecosystem management. 41st Congress of the International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE) (Yucatan, Mexico). See:

www.isae2007.com/

Aug 21-25

6th World congress on alternatives and animal use in the life sciences (Tokyo, Japan). See: www.knt.co.jp/ec/2007/wc6

Aug 26-29

58th Annual meeting of the European Association of Animal Production (EAAP) (Dublin, Ireland). See:

www.eaap2007.ie/reg_interest.htm

Autumn 2007

Sep 17-19

13th European congress on biotechnology (Barcelona, Spain). See: <http://efb-central.org/europeancongress/>

Sep 17-19

World conference on research integrity (Lisbon, Portugal). See:

www.esf.org/esf_pressarea_page.php?new_srelease=116

Oct 24-27

Aquaculture Europe 2007: Competing claims (Istanbul, Turkey). See:

www.easonline.org/agenda/en/description.asp?id=384

Publications

**FAWC, *Report on welfare labelling*.
Farm Animal Welfare Council, London
2006.**

This report covers the Council's views on the labelling of livestock-based products in relation to the welfare of farmed animals. It makes recommendations to improve the welfare of farmed animals through appropriate labelling. See:

www.fawc.org.uk/reports/welfarelabel-0606.pdf

Lange, S. et al., *European research in organic food and farming*. Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE), Bonn 2006.

Issued by the German Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE) this book presents reports on how research programmes were organised and conducted in eleven European countries involved in CORE Organic (a 3-year coordination action project in organic food and farming). The book contains summaries of these country reports, which developed as comprehensive by-products to the mapping of existing information about programmes, institutions, projects and facilities within the field of organic food & farming research in the CORE Organic partner countries.

Funding calls

ESF research networking programmes

Organisation/Institute
European Science Foundation (ESF)

Deadline
October 30, 2006

Description
Long term networking activities bringing together nationally funded research groups, to address a major scientific or research infrastructure issue. Proposals must show the potential to be carried out at the European level. See:
www.esf.org/newsrelease/104/2006Comm onCallad.pdf

EURYI awards

Organisation/Institute
European Science Foundation (ESF)

Deadline
November 30, 2006

Description
These awards enable outstanding young scientists in any area of scientific research, from any country in the world, to create their own research teams at European universities and other research institutions. EURYI is a joint initiative of Eurohorcs and ESF. See:
www.esf.org/newsrelease/104/2006Comm onCallad.pdf

EuroBioFund

European Union has launched EuroBioFund, a new initiative that aims to help Europe remain a global player in life sciences by coordinating interaction between researchers and funders. EuroBioFund is supported by the European Commission. The EuroBioFund has three main vehicles and objectives:

- EuroBioForum, an annual conference, will provide a platform for networking and brokerage among funding organizations and researchers;
- EuroBioGenerator will help organize and generate research programs on a European scale and scope;
- EuroBioAccess will help develop joint investments and funding of life science research.

The inaugural EuroBioForum is scheduled for December 14-15, 2006, in Helsinki.

See:

www.esf.org/esf_genericpage.php?language=0§ion=8&domain=0&genericpage=2580

[e=0§ion=8&domain=0&genericpage=2580](http://www.esf.org/esf_genericpage.php?language=0§ion=8&domain=0&genericpage=2580)

Expressions of interest for companies

Organisation/Institute

Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC)

Deadline

March 3, 2009

Description

The IPTS intends to compile a list of companies interested in the execution of studies in a number of fields, including life sciences, agriculture, agrofoods, biotechnology, research policy, greenhouse mitigation policies, sustainable production and consumption, support to research policy (including human resources and universities), and social dimension of sustainable development. See:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=25763&DOC=1&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1154445420830

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Deadline for the next issue: 15 November 2006