The Graduate School VLAG

VLAG FLASH

Newsletter of the PhD-students of the Graduate School Vlag (Advanced studies in food technology, agrobiotechnology, nutrition and health sciences) May 2003, Volume 3, Number 7

Contents

News from the secretariat of the Graduate School VLAG

VLAG External Review

The Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) has decided that those graduate schools that submit a request for re-accreditation should provide a report of an external review. On 15, 16 and 17 April 2003 VLAG organised the second external review (the first one was held in 1998) and this was done in order to meet the criteria of the KNAW when VLAG will submit its request for re-accreditation (December 2003).

The External Review Committee was composed of six known scientists (Prof. Barth, Germany; Prof MacDonald, UK; Dr. O'Brien, Ireland but working in France; Prof. Norton, UK; Prof. Poutanen, Finland and Prof. von Stockar, Switzerland). Their expertise covered all research areas in VLAG. They reviewed the VLAG research programme and also looked at the VLAG education programme. On Wednesday 16th April the Committee had a one and a half hour discussion with four members of the VLAG PhD council. In the discussion it became clear that the Committee supported the freedom of choice the PhD students have to compose their individual education programme.

The External Review Committtee in the front, together with Prof. Frans Kok, Prof. Wim Saris, Fre Pepping, Gie Liem and Ruud Verkerk (both reporters)

The full report of the committee is still being edited but the most important conclusions and recommendations with respect to situation of the PhD students and the education programme can be summarised as follows;

- The annual meetings between PhD student and promotor as described in the contract (the so-called 'functioneringsgesprekken') should indeed be realised and the discussion and action points should be properly documented.
- The committee considers the time allotted to research, education and training with 75, 15 and 10% respectively, to be adequate.
- The committee thinks that the cultivation of research capabilities should be given more importance than professional capabilities
- The content of the course programme covers most of the advanced topics in food science and nutrition. In future time consideration should be given to integrate more international faculty.
- The committee encourages VLAG to raise the understanding amongst PhD students and supervisors that a broad understanding nutrition and food science is a paramount importance for scientific and professional competence. Up to now the education programme is well suited to guarantee a stable professional situation of the alumni.

Fré Pepping

VLAG PhD party 2002

Every year VLAG organizes a party for all its PhD students. The goal is of course to promote contact among all VLAG members, both Dutch and international, based in and outside of Wageningen.
Last year the party took place on December 13th, at SSR, Wageningen. The theme was "Sinterklass" and the dinner was a typical Dutch meal appropriate for the cold season. To complete the winter picture, the first year's frost hit the streets (and so did some of the party-goers on their way back home…it was VERY slippery).

Regardless of the weather, the attendance and the atmosphere were great. There was lots of dancing and laughing (see photo 1). We were pleased to see that students from other places in the Netherlands also came and we hope to see more of them in future years. Also, many international students were present which contributed to the festive mood, especially when Sinterklaas asked them to sing songs from their native countries (see photo 2) For those of you wondering why Sinterklaas's assistants were not black, as the tradition goes, the explanation is that their working season was over… They were supposed to go back to Spain, but we asked them to stay for the party. Therefore, no need to climb up the chimney and no soot on the faces of the Piets! (see photo 3)

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the other organizers, Ynte de Vries and Marjan van Erk, for their work and the nice lunch meetings we had together. Thanks to the band Nozel, to SSR, to Fré for his input and VLAG for the financial support. Special thanks to all of you who attended and contributed to the success of the party!

Eira Carballo

EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Welcome to our 7th issue of the VLAG-FLASH. In this number we present our regular columns (In & Out, New PhD projects, Dissertations, Overview of the Courses and News from the PhD Councils), accompanied by a number of interesting news.

You can read about the external evaluation for the re-accreditation of our graduate school VLAG. This evaluation took place on April, 15-17. Preliminary results are presented in this issue of the newsletter.

Due to increasing interest by the international students, the "uitstroom cursus" organized by VLAG for PhD students in their finalizing stage, this course was taught in English for the first time. A short review of the course is presented. You will also find an account of the symposium "Future Perspectives of Human Health; the Role for Nutrigenomics" that took place of April 15th and was organized by the Centre for Human Nutrigenomics, NWO-Nutrition and Chronic Diseases and VLAG. Furthermore, a story on the new Carbohydrate Research Center, opened on April 24th in Wageningen, is included.

As an extra hand for all of you looking for new learning opportunities, VLAG will provide a list of external courses (so courses NOT organized by VLAG) on its website. The address is: *http://www.wau.nl/vlag/courels.html*

Finally, as promised in our last issue, we'll give you a scoop of the VLAG PhD party of last December, including a couple of pictures of Fré Pepping and his politically correct "White" Piets.

We wish everyone many sunny days and success in their research. See you in our next issue!

The Editorial Board

The Graduate School *VLAG* (Advanced Studies in Food Technology, Agrobiotechnology, Nutrition and Health Sciences) is a cooperative endeavour of Wageningen Univertsity, Utrecht University, The Catholic University of Nijmegen, Maastricht University, Wageningen Research Centre - Agrotechnological Research Institute (ATO), Wageningen Research Centre Institute of Food Safety (RIKILT), NIZO Food Research, TNO Nutrition and Food Reserch and the Netherlands Institue of Public Health and Enviroment (RIVM), the Netherlands

New PhD Projects

Niels Boon, 01-12-2002
Role of calcium in weight regulation and prevalence of obesity.
(AIO-project, UM-Human Biology. Supervisor: Prof. W. Saris)

Andriaan Akerboom, 01-01-2003
Engineering of biosensors for sugar detection.
(AIO-project, WU-Microbiology. Supervisors: Prof. W. de Vos, Dr. J. van der Oost)

Kirsten Baken, 01-01-2003
Can immunotoxic agents be characterized on the basis of their differential gene expression profiles? (AIO-project, UM-Health Risk Analysis and Toxicology. Supervisors: Prof. van Loveren, Prof. Kleinjans)

Suzanne Jeurissen, 01-01-2003
Dietary risks and ingredient interactions between (anti)carcinogens from herbs.
(AIO-project WU-Toxicology/Organic Chemistry. Supervisors: Prof. I. Rietjens, Prof. E. Sudhölter, Dr. T. van Beek)

Anouk Pijpe, 01-01-2003
ATP infusion to improve fatigue, nutritional status and survival in non-small-cell lung cancer patients during and after radiotherapy: a double-blind randomized clinical trial.
(AIO-project, UM-Epidemiology. Supervisors: Prof P. van den Brandt, Dr. P. Dagnelie)

Evelien Reinaerts, 01-01-2003
200 grams of vegetables, 2 pieces of fruit? Naturally!
(OIO-project: UM-Health Education. Supervisors: prof. N de Vries, Dr. J. de Nooyer, Dr. Avan de Kar)

Maykel Roelen, 01-01-2003
Colloids, capsules, and nanostructured films from cell wall polysaccharides.
(VLAG AIO-project, WU-Physical Chemistry and Colloid Sciences. Supervisors: Prof. M. Cohen Stuart, Dr. A. de Keizer)

Hilde Ruis, 01-01-2003
Cheese.
(AIO-project, WU-Food Physics. Supervisors: Prof. E. van der Linden, Dr. P. Venema)

Mariella Serrano, 01-01-2003
Engineering of thiol production in lactic acid bacteria.
(AIO-project, WU-Microbiology/NIZO Food Research. Supervisors: Prof. W.M. de Vos, Dr. J. Hugenholtz)

Yvonne Vissers, 01-01-2003
Regulation of protein breakdown in cancer.
(AGIKO-project, UM-Surgery. Supervisors: Prof. Von Meyenfeldt, Dr. M. Deutz)

Pim de Waard, 01-01-2003
Natural ah-receptors agonists in human diet.
(AIO-project, UM-GRAT. Supervisors: Prof. F. van Schooten, Dr. J. Aarts, Dr. T. de Kolk)

Harmen van de Werken, 01-01-2003
Computational genomics of prokaryotes.
(OIO-project WU-Microbiology. Supervisors: Prof. W.M. de Vos, Dr. J. van de Oost)

Joep Derikx, 01-02-2003
Leaky gut syndromes.
(AIO-project, UM-Surgery. Supervisors: Prof. W. Buurman Dr. E. Heineman)

Ralf Manders, 01-02-2003
Amino acid induced insulin secretion and protein anabolism in type 2 diabetes.
(AIO-project, UM-Human Biology.Supervisors: Prof. W. Saris, Dr. L. van Loon, Dr. A. Wagenmakers)

Julita Manski, 01-02-2003
(AIO-project, WU-Process engineering. Supervisors: Prof R.M. Boom, Dr. A.J. van der Goot)

Martien Schellart, 01-02-2003
Leaky gut, intestinal ischemia.
(AIO-project, UM-Surgery. Supervisors: Prof. W. Buurman, Dr. E. Heineman)

Selvakumari Sankaranarayanan 12-02-2003
Role of arginine in B-cell development.
(AIO-project UM-Anatomy & Embryology. Supervisors: Prof. W.H. Lamers, Dr. E. Köhler)

Henk-Jan Joosten, 15-02-2003
Physiology of organic acid production by Aspergillus niger and functional genomics of the supramolecular enzyme complexes involved
(AIO-project, WU-Microbiology. Supervisor: Dr. P. Schaap)

Carolien Booijink, 24-02-2003
Funcional Microbiomics.
(AIO-project, WU-Microbiology. Supervisors: Prof. W.M. de Vos, Dr. E. Vaughan

Tim Baks, 01-03-03
Enzymatic conversions in highly concentrated reaction systems.
(AIO-project, WU-Process engineering. Supervisor: Prof. R. Boom)

Stefan Dullens, 01-03-2003
Regulation and determination of APOA-1 synthese in the colon.
(AIO-project, UM-Human Biology. Supervisors: Prof. R Mensink, prof. E. Mariman, Dr. J. Plat)

Saskia Rietjens, 01-03-2003
Effect of hydroxytyrosol on radical mediated muscle damage.
(AIO-project, UM-Pharmacology & Toxicology. Supervisors: Prof. A. Bast, Dr. G. Haenen)

Elke Theuwissen, 15-03-2003
Effects of a simultaneous intake of dietary fiber plus plant stanol esters on concentrations of serum lipids and cardiovascular risk markers in healthy men and women.
(AIO-project, UM-Human Biology. Supervisors: Prof. R. Mensink, Dr. J. Plat)

Mandy Claessens, 01-04-2003
Optimal carbohydrate / protein foods for energy restricted diets.
(AIO-project UM-Human Biology. Supervisor: Prof. W. Saris)

New Postdoc Projects

Marije Hoos, 01-01-2003
UM-Paediatrics

Juanita Vernooy, 01-01-2003
UM-Pulmonology

Marco Mensink, 15-02-03
UM-Human Biology

Esther van Asselt, 01-03-2003
Databases for Microbiological Risk Assessment
Supervisor: Prof. M. Zwietering

Lydia Afman, 01-05-2003
WU-Human Nutrition/Nutrition, metabolisme and genomics group

Marleen Kamphuis, 01-05-2003
Supervisors: Dr. K. de Graaf and Dr. P. Luning (VLAG-postdoc)

Sotiris Koutsopoulos, 01-01-2003
WU-Microbiology

Symposium Future Perspectives of Human Health; the Role for Nutrigenomics.

Photo 1, three participents

On April 15th a symposium with the theme "Future Perspectives of Human Health; the Role for Nutrigenomics" was held. The symposium was meant for PhD students from the Centre for Human Nutrigenomics, NWO-Nutrition and Chronic Diseases and the Graduate school VLAG (see photo 1). The design of the symposium was different, as this was to be a discussion symposium. The organiser dr. Jaap Keijer of the RIKILT-institute for food safety recently attended a congress in Italy where in two days, only four speakers made their presentation. These presentations lasted each an hour after which there was room for a 3-hour-discussion. Dr. Keijer mentioned that he learned more from these discussions than from any other presentation ever and that he wanted to try this concept in Wageningen.

First speaker of the day was Prof. dr. D. Muller-Wieland whose presentation was called: "From transcription factors to a healthier diet". Insulin resistance is a disorder that can lead to diabetes mellitus or type 2 diabetes. Insulin can give a message to the cell via the insulin receptor, which as a kinase can activate the Ras complex, which will lead to different transcription factors. Some of these factors are the Sterol Regulatory Element Binding Proteins (SREBP's). Part of Prof. Muller-Wieland's research was aimed at what influences the binding DNA activity of SREBP's and what influences its expression activity. He used a great new software package for interpreting 2D gels. This software gives a 3D view of the gel and is a great help for detecting spot, double spots and artefacts. This will be very useful for people using proteomics.

Prof. dr. Hanelore Daniel (see photo 2) made a presentation which was called: "New avenues for nutrigenomics". She told of her vision of the future in which you could access a database with your cell phone to get a personal advice (determined by your SNP's) of what you have to eat that day to remain in good health. Her research was specialised in the working mechanism of di- and tripeptide transporters. When looking at a tripeptide, there can be up to 8000 different possibilities, from a charge of 3+ to 3- and from hydrophobic to hydrophilic and only one peptide transporter transports all of these possibilities. One assay she used was using Xenopus' oocytes in which she injected peptide transporter cDNA. As hydrogen ions are used in the transport op the peptides there is a fluctuation in the pH and electric potential. These fluctuations can be measured with electrodes. She had also used C. elegans in which she had knocked-out the peptide transporter. The little worm showed signs of malnutrition and of life span extension as a consequence of this malnutrition.

Photo 2, Prof. Hannelore Daniel

Prof. dr. P.E. Slagboom was the third speaker with "Gene variants and a healthier diet". She looked at ageing and longevity in populations. One of the problems of her research is the question when a survey among a limited amount of test persons becomes a good representation of the entire humankind. How many persons do you have to survey and if all the subjects come from one region, is it still a representative sample? Unfortunately this topic wasn't pick up by the audience and only questions about the research itself were asked.

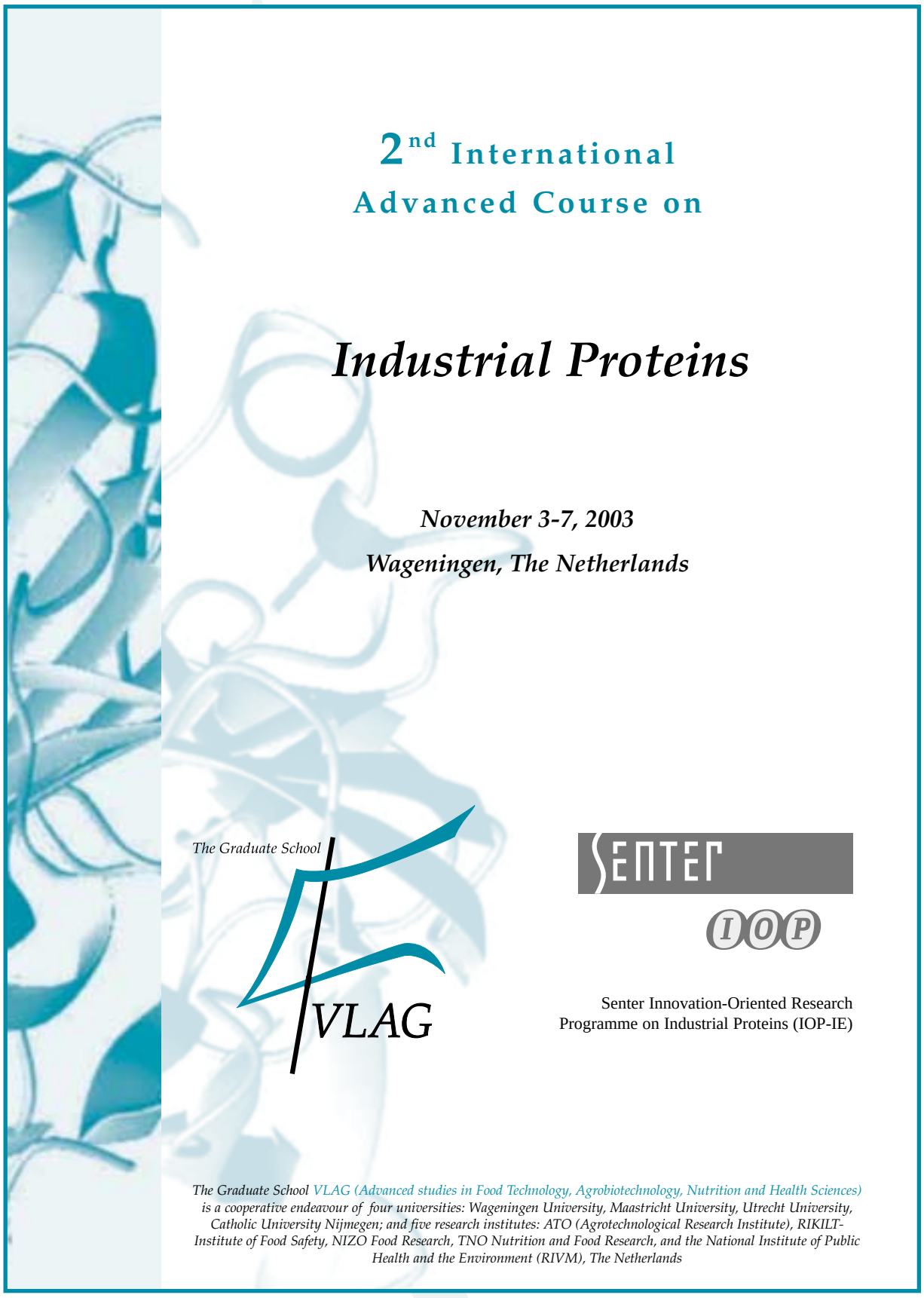
Conluding remarks came from Dr. Keijer and all speakers were thanked heartily for their performance. A prize was awarded for the PhD student who had most actively participated in the discussions. As the inventor of the concept of a discussion symposium was the Italian professor Cinti, the prize was

Photo 3, Vincent van Beelen

called the 'Cinti'-award. The prize was a good bottle of Italian wine. (As I was the lucky winner, I can tell that it tasted very well (see photo 3))

All in all the topics were very interesting but the discussions didn't really get going. Maybe the background of the audience was to broad or maybe it was just adjustment to a new concept. I think that this concept may work very well and may lead to a greater exchange of knowledge when the participants get acquainted with this new phenomenon.

Vincent van Beelen, PhD-student (CHN)



VLAG "Uitstroom cursus":

Successful functioning in organisations

On 30 March – 3 April 2003 and 14-15 April 2003, VLAG's 'uitstroom' course for the last-year PhD. students was given for the first time in English. The course, which was given by the company Leeuwendal, covers many interesting topics such as: extensive management training games, including group evaluation, personality analyses, negotiation skills and stress handling tips. We learned to understand different types of personalities, including our own, and how those personalities can function at their best within organisations. Some of us thought that the part about personality analyses and stress handling tips could have been useful if given in the second year of the PhD. projects. We were in total 17 participants with different nationalities: Brazilian, Portuguese, Iranian, Tunisian, Indonesian, Canadian and certainly Dutch. Due to the multicultural nature of the group, it was also the first time that a session 'Intercultural Communication' was added to the course package. A half Dutch professor from the University…..in Switzerland, Prof. Samuel van den Bergh, presented this session with amusing games, jokes, and stories about typical characteristics of different nationalities. At the end we could conclude that despite the differences, a multicultural environment in organisations, if managed correctly, is an exceptional benefit.

Yovita Rahardjo

News from the PhD Councils

Disagreement about AIO salaries

The negotiations between the universities and the trade unions have been interrupted, because of a difference in opinion about the AIO salaries. The disagreement is based on a university job ranking project (in Dutch: Universitair Functie Ordenen, UFO in short) that was carried out by consultants of the Hay Group.
The new university job ranking project would be introduced in April 2003 and discussions on this subject already started years ago. The goal of the UFO project is to decrease the amount of different job descriptions at the universities from 22.000 to 150 and to assign a suitable salary to each job description. The consultants of the Hay Group have indicated that AIO's should be paid more (level 10 of the collective employment agreement of Dutch universities).
Some of the Dutch universities do not agree with the proposed AIO salary and want to exclude AIO's from this new job ranking project. Their argument is that it is too expensive to raise the salaries of AIO's. The trade unions stick to their opinion that all employees should be treated the same and that the proposed salary should be given to the AIO's. Otherwise, the unions will not agree to implement the whole job ranking project at all.
The LAIOO (Dutch national association for AIO's and OIO's) agrees with the trade unions that a higher salary for AIO's is very legitimate. AIO's do most of the research at universities, have teaching tasks and are normal employees. The fact that AIO's are still in training is not a proper argument for a low salary, because also in companies young employees receive training and they do not get salary cuts for following these courses. According to the LAIOO, Dutch universities should invest more money and effort in attracting young talent. Otherwise talented researchers will choose for a career outside academia.
The outcome of the conflict is still unsure. The current collective employment agreement will expire in August. Hopefully by that time the universities have seen the light!

Sandra van der Graaf
Secretary LAIOO

OVERVIEW OF THE 2003/2004 COURSES

VLAG courses 2003-2004

www.wau.nl/vlag/eduvlco.html

www.nutrim.unimaas.nl

2003

Courses

12-21 May	Bioinformatics
2-7 June	Nutritional and lifestyle epidemiology
16-19 June	Unified aproach to mass transfer (Delft)
29 September-2 October	VLAG PhD week (Bilthoven)
6-7 October	Masterclass Nutrigenomics
6-24 October	Production and use of food composition data in nutrition
13-16 October	Food perception and food preference
3-7 November	Industrial Proteins
23-29 November	EU-course Chemistry and biochemistry of antioxidants
November	Type 2 diabetes mellitus: oorzaken, gevolgen en behandeling, Maastricht

Other activities:

15-16 May	4th International Symposium on Industrial Proteins "Industrial Proteins in Perspective", Ede
12-15 July	SSIB Satellite Maastricht, The Netherlands
13-16 July	12th International Biochemistry of Excercise Conference, Maastricht
8-9 November	2nd International Nutrigenomics Conference (TNO)

Thematic meetings:

16 May	Do it QIQ: A calculated journey into the Preservation and Quality Hyperspace
4 June	Membrane emulsification, The quest for the perfect membrane
22 October	5th CHN-thematic meeting
10 December	Veranderingen in Lichaamssamenstelling: effecten van voeding, training en medicatie, Maastricht

2004

Courses

15-19 March	Management of food safety
27-28 April	Masterclass Nutrition in elderly
11-14 May	Masterclass Proteomics (Maastricht)
22-25 November	Genetics and physiology of food-associated micro-organisms

Courses will be held in Wageningen unless indicated.

It's easy! Just copy and paste this code into your page's HTML:

http://www.wau.nl/vlag/courels.html

For courses elsewhere
(general courses as well as discipline specific courses)

In & Out

Name Martijn Bours
Place & date of birth Weert (The Netherlands) 31/12/1975
Research title Effect of adenosine-5′-triphosphate on disease activity in inflammatory bowel disease and rheumatoid arthritis
Group/Department Nutrition, Epidemiology UM
Promotors Dr. P.C. Dagnelie, Prof. dr. P.A. van den Brandt
Start of PhD project January 2002

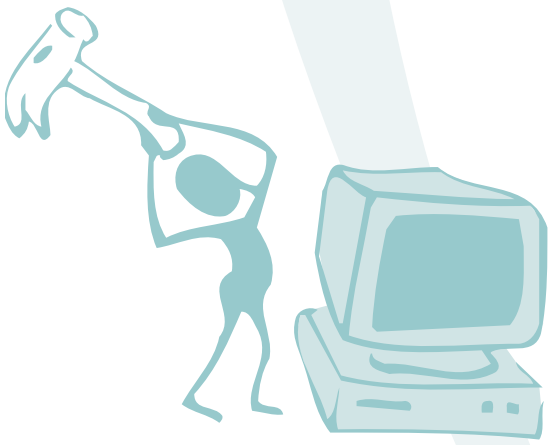
In...

After having graduated in Health Sciences from Maastricht University in October 2001, and while recovering from knee surgery, I had plenty of time to think about my future plans. I had to decide whether I would go back to work as a physiotherapist or try to get a job as a researcher. It didn't take me long to choose the latter. So, I started looking for a research job, not specifically to obtain a PhD degree, but just to get an opportunity to do research on an interesting topic. In January 2002, I found such an interesting topic at the University of Maastricht's Department of Epidemiology, on which I am currently still working.

My research project deals with the effects of adenosine-5′-triphosphate (ATP) on disease activity and inflammation in patients with inflammatory bowel disease and rheumatoid arthritis. ATP is a naturally occurring purine nucleotide that is well-known for its role in intracellular energy metabolism. However, it has become increasingly clear over the last several years that ATP is also capable of exerting various effects in the extracellular compartment, including modulation of the immune system. These extracellular effects are mediated through a family of purinergic receptors (P2 receptors) present on a variety of cell types throughout the body. At the moment, we are preparing a study in which we intend to reduce increased disease activity in patients with rheumatoid arthritis by administering ATP. Looking back on almost one and a half years of working as a PhD student, I still very much enjoy working as a researcher. In my opinion, in spite of the fact that some things do not always turn out the way you would want them to, being a PhD student offers many advantages, such as learning to write research proposals and papers, taking a variety of interesting courses as well as learning from the scientific experience of your supervisor(s). Overall, I am well pleased with the choice I made and look forward to the next two and a half years of research.

Name Mireille Weijers (WCFS, WUR)[mireille.weijers@nizo.nl]
Place & date of birth Hoogkarspel (The Netherlands) 24/04/1975
Research title Heat-set protein dispersions and gels
Promotors: Prof. M.A. Cohen Stuart, Dr. R.W. Visschers, Dr. P. Barneveld
Group/Department WU-Laboratory of Physical Chemistry and Colloid Science, WCFS, NIZO
Start of PhD project October 2000

&...



I am now working for two and a half-year as a PhD fellow for the Wageningen Centre for Food Sciences and I am located at NIZO food research, Ede. The general aim of my project is to get a better understanding of heat-induced denaturation and aggregation behaviour of cystein-containing globular proteins, resulting in functionality in foods. The three main topics are denaturation, aggregation and gelation.

The first three-month were perhaps the most difficult ones. I wondered if I was on the right track and if it was good enough. Happily, my supervisors gave me the support I needed and from that moment on working was pleasure. Currently we finished the subjects on denaturation and aggregation, which will result in four manuscripts (one is published and two will be submitted shortly). In collaboration with Taco Nicolai from the University du Main, France, we work on the heat-induced gelation of ovalbumin and b-lactoglobulin. For this collaboration I spent 2 periods of one month in Le Mans. Additional work is carried out in collaboration with Arno Alting (PhD fellow WCFS), we worked on cold gelation of ovalbumin, which will result in a publication. There are still some interesting subjects I shall work on in my last year. I will work together with Kerensa Broersen (PhD fellow WCFS)on the effect of charge on the gelation properties of ovalbumin gels. Further, I will concentrate on writing manuscripts and probably go for another working period (one month) to the University du Main.

To answer the question: "What can you say about the advantages/disadvantages of being a PhD?" is not difficult. For me, there are really no disadvantages being a PhD fellow. For me there we a lot of possibilities to go to (inter-) national conferences, working periods at other Universities and to do experiments at the Synchrotron in Grenoble. The only conditions are that you need the perseverance to do what you really want to do. I would like to recommend all of you to go on for instance a working period on another University, because it is very effective and good for your network.

Name Ana Costa
Place & date of Birth Lisbon (Portugal), 08/09/1972
Thesis title New insights into consumer-oriented food product design
Institution Product Design and Quality Management Group, Department of Agrotechnology and Food Sciences, Wageningen University
Promotors Prof. Dr. W.M.F. Jongen, Prof. Dr. ir. F.M. Rombouts
Co-promotor Dr. M. Dekker
Date of defence 02/05/2003, Wageningen University

Out...

My research topic concerned both methodological and practical aspects of consumer-oriented food product design processes. The thesis main outcome consists in the development and/or testing of methods which can be used for the implementation of consumer-oriented new product development processes in the context of agri-food chains. Some guidelines for future successful implementation of consumer-orientation within the food industry are also proposed.

Out of my own experience, and of those who surround me, I can tell you that the way towards a PhD diploma (and the book that goes with it!)is long and hard, especially in its last stages. However, as with everything in life, it is mostly what you make of it. Given the chance to go back, I would do it all over again, in the same intense way, same mistakes and everything. For me, it was a powerful learning experience, not only about research but also about myself. Nevertheless, I believe now that the road towards one's aims is more important than the achievement of the aims itself. Therefore, I would certainly take more time to enjoy life, fours years is too much time to devote entirely to science!

My immediate plans concern experiencing enormous fun and satisfaction together with my family, friends and co-workers on the day of my defence, and also finding time for some serious holidays in some far-away, exotic land (preferably with no war or virus!). Meanwhile, I have started a new job at ID-DLO in Lelystad (Division Nutrition and Food) as researcher, again in the field of innovation within agri-food chains, which is certainly going to keep me very busy for the coming years. For the rest.. well, I will just take it as it comes.

What PhD's always wanted to know ...

Dear PhD student,

Have you ever had a question that you did not dare to ask? Do you think that you know something deep inside that everybody should know?

This is your opportunity!

Send us your questions, remarks and opinions (ingeborg.vanleeuwen-bol@wur.nl), and we will to get back to you on that.

Dissertations

The following VLAG PhD-fellows successfully defended their thesis

17 January 2003 at Maastricht University
Marjan de Rijke: 'Cancer in the elderly'.
Supervisors: prof. PA van den Brandt, Dr. L. Schouten, Dr. H. Schouten

28 January 2003 at Wageningen University
Bei-Zhong Han: 'Characterization and product innovation of Sufu, a Chinese fermented soybean food'.
Supervisors: Prof. F. Rombouts, Dr. M. Nout

5 February 2003 at Wageningen University
Tiny Hoekstra: 'Fibrinolysis, inflammation and cardiovascular disease. Epidemiological studies of Plasminogen activator inhibitor-type 1 and C-reactive protein'.
Supervisors: Prof. F. Kok, Prof. E. Schouten, Dr. J. Geleijnse

28 February 2003 at Maastricht University
Harry Gosker: 'Skeletal muscle dysfunction in COPD: from a metabolic and histochemical perspective'.
Supervisors: Prof. E. Wouters, Prof. G. van der Vusse, Dr. A. Schols

17 March 2003 at Wageningen University
Melaku Umeta: 'Role of zinc in stunting of infants and childres in rural Ethiopia'.
Supervisors: Prof. J. Hautvast, Prof. C. West

19 March 2003 at Wageningen University
Siet Sijtsema: 'Your Health!? Transforming health perception into food product characteristics in consumer-oriented product design'.
Supervisors: Prof. W. Jongen, Dr. A. Linnemann

21 March 2003 at Maastricht University
Danielle Kerckhoffs: 'Dietary components and cardiovascular risk markers: Effects of tocotrienols, B-Glucan and plant stanol esters'.
Supervisors: Prof. G. Hornstra, Prof. R. Mensink

4 April 2003 at Wageningen University
Anna Lopez Contreras: 'Utilization of Lignocellulosic substrates by solvent-producing Clostridia'.
Supervisor: Prof. W. de Vos, Dr. J. van der Oost, Dr. P. Claassen

15 April 2003 at Wageningen University
Anna Rzepiela: 'Deformation and fracture behavior of simulated particle gels'.
Supervisors: Prof. J. Grasman, Dr. J. van Opheusden, Dr. T. van Vliet

22 April 2003 at Wageningen University
Wout Wolken: 'Production of natural flavour compounds. Bioconversion of monoterpenes by spores of penicillium digitatum'.
Supervisors: Prof. J. Tramper, Dr. M. van der Werf

2 May 2003 at Wageningen University
Ana de Almeida Costa: 'New insights into consumer-oriented food product design'.
Supervisors: Prof. W. Jongen, Prof. F. Rombouts, Dr. M. Dekker

2 May 2003 at Maastricht University
Juanita Vernooij: 'Characterization of inflammation in COPD: Clinical and experimental approach'.
Supervisors: Prof. G. van der Vusse, Dr. A. Schols

9 May 2003 at Wageningen University
Anneke Martin: 'Mechanical and conformational aspects of protein layers on water'.
Supervisors: Prof. M. Cohen Stuart, Dr. T. van Vliet, Dr. M. Bos

9 May 2003 at Maastricht University
Anita Vreugdenhil: 'Intestinal defense against bacterial toxins: role of LPS binding protein and lipoproteins'.
Supervisors: Prof. G. van der Vusse, Dr. A. Schols

Colophon

VLAG-FLASH is the newsletter of the PhD-students of the Graduate School Vlag (Advanced Studies in Food Technology, Agrobiotechnology, Nutrition and Health Sciences). VLAG-FLASH is published three times a year. In every newsletter attention will be paid to ongoing research, general information concerning training- and research activities of Vlag, the agenda of relevant courses, congresses etc.

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Wageningen starts its Carbohydrate Research Centre

Since April 24th, another expertise centre within Wageningen UR has started its activities officially: the Carbohydrate Research Centre Wageningen (CRC Wageningen). CRC-Wageningen aims to coordinate the carbohydrate oriented research performed by all different groups from Wageningen UR covering a broad range of expertise and infrastructure and CRC-Wageningen wants to be a central entry for (fundamental research) questions within this field.

Within Wageningen UR, scientists from several academic groups and ATO business units are active with almost all possible aspects of carbohydrate research. Generally recognised expertise is present about carbohydrates in relation to (micro)biology, chemistry, physics, processing and nutrition. Through the CRC-Wageningen, Wageningen UR offers industrial partners and National and International research foundations an 'one-stop-shop' for fundamental, strategic as well as application oriented questions, and hopes to improve the availability of fundamental research on carbohydrates for its use in food and non-food applications.

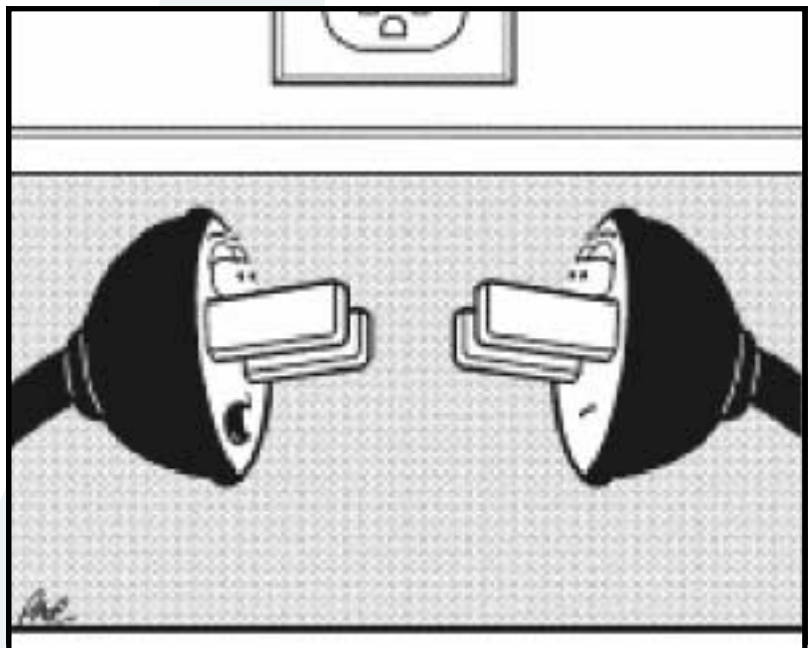
Initially, CRC Wageningen starts with 4 research themes including 9 PhD projects:
- Chemical and enzymatic modification of carbohydrates (Organic chemistry, Biochemistry, Microbiology-Bacterial Genetics, ATO)
- Polysaccharide engineering for functional polymers and improved composite materials (Plant Breeding, Physical Chemistry and Colloid sciences
- Precision-engineering of food microstructures with functional carbohydrates through the use of microtechnology (Food Process Engineering, Food Physics)
- Plant cell wall architecture as indicator for food quality (Food Chemistry, Microbiology-Fungal Genetics)

Current status May 1, 2003: five PhD students have started their research.
All PhD fellows will participate within VLAG, while one project will participate within EPS as well.

More information can be found (soon) at *www.crc-wageningen.nl* (still under construction) or by e-mail: *crc-wageningen@wur.nl*

CRC

THE JOKE'S ON YOU by Phil Ryder & YOU



"Should we tell 'em why the computer won't work... or let them call support?"

- Sheila Moss • Nashville, TN

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