

Foreword

In the times of global processes of joining of scientific efforts, particularly in the field of life sciences, regional co-operation is of particular importance, especially for smaller countries with developing scientific potential, such as mid-European transition countries. Similar to other scientific disciplines, microbiology in countries like Croatia, Hungary or Slovenia can further develop by joint programmes aimed towards further participation in international (European) scientific and educational projects.

Having this in mind, microbiological societies of the three countries organised a common symposium under the title »Power of Microbes in Industry and Environment«. The meeting was held in Opatija, Croatia, from 7th–9th June, 2002 and it covered all aspects of industrial and environmental microbiology, as well as food microbiology. The co-organisers, Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology and Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb, provided the required logistics for the Organising and the Scientific committees and the Grand Hotel Adriatic and the city of Opatija served as a perfect venue for the Symposium. Altogether 159 microbiologists, mainly from Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia, but also from other countries, participated at the meeting. Their results were reported through 21 lectures and 61 poster presentations and, according to the general opinion, the quality of science presented was very good. The plenary lectures were held by distinguished microbiologists from South Africa, France, Germany, Finland, Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia. As usual, abstracts of all contributions were published in the corresponding Book of abstracts.

Finally, it has to be noted that, much like the scientific part of the Symposium, the social events were also very successful in bringing the scientists together, setting the fundamentals for further meetings and collaboration. The 80th Anniversary of the Department of Microbiology of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb was celebrated within the Symposium. Besides, an excursion to the Istrian town of Pazin with a visit to the Museum of Istria and the old »Pavlin« monastery in a place called St. Peter in the Forest was a chance for relaxation and personal contacts. The excursion ended with a typical Istrian dinner in an authentic restaurant.

This issue of Food Technology and Biotechnology comprises 14 papers describing a selection of reports presented at the symposium »Power of Microbes in Industry and Environment«, thus reflecting its scientific scope.

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