



PRESS RELEASE

First MoniQA Conference (October 8-10, 2008, Rome) focussing on increased consumer trust in rapid analysis for food safety

(Vienna, 18/09/2008) **MoniQA – an EU funded project connecting global players in the field of food safety and quality – brings together key stakeholders in Rome to analyse emerging food quality and safety issues**

Globalized trade in food means more choice for consumers and benefits for the economy. At the same time, it may also threaten human health if stringent safety checks are not implemented. **Trust** is a key factor in any interaction, even more so when we are dealing with our “daily bread” and other foodstuff. This is why the EU-funded project MoniQA (**M**onitoring and **Q**uality **A**ssurance in the Food Supply Chain) will focus on trust (particularly in fairly recently developed rapid food analysis methods) in its first international conference.

This event brings together food safety scientists, socio-economists, regulators and representatives from industry and trade as well as the media from around the globe to discuss the most recent challenges in avoiding and controlling unwanted substances in the food production chain, and the newest developments and innovations in rapid and reliable analysis of food contaminants. Speakers include representatives from the FAO and the European Commission as well as renown experts on food safety issues.

Participants will have the opportunity to gain new insights into issues such as method performance requirements and criteria, quality assurance and quality control, sampling, uncertainty, legislation, economic and socio-economic impact, traceability, harmonisation and standardisation, qualitative methods, rapid methods and high throughput methods.

The keynote speeches focus on risk management and trust in food safety, uncertainty from sampling, collaboration with CEN ISO and FP7 research challenges in food quality and safety control. Each technical session of this conference is dedicated to a specific hot topic, and was organised by a corresponding MoniQA working group:

- Food Authenticity
- Food Additives
- Mycotoxins and Phycotoxins
- Food Allergens
- Chemical Contaminants
- Microbiological Contaminants
- Horizontal issues

Our plenary sessions are complemented by poster presentations (including a best poster award) and a small exhibition. Summaries of all presentations in the different sessions will be made available to all participants in the proceedings of the conference (available on request). In addition to our lectures and debates, networking and informal sharing of experience, including a gala dinner, also form an important part of the MoniQA conference.

Want to know more about the first international MoniQA conference? Take a look at the conference website at www.moniqua.org/rome2008 or get in touch with one of our contact persons (see below). We are looking forward to seeing you there!



About the MoniQA project

Funded by the European Union, the MoniQA project establishes long-lasting cooperation among leading food research institutions, food and biotech industries, as well as small- and medium-sized businesses to ensure food quality and safety for consumers.

In today's globalised economy it is vital that food quality and safety methods and standards are harmonized on a global level as well. The European Union is addressing this challenge through MoniQA (**M**onitoring and **Q**uality **A**ssurance in the Food Supply Chain), which is funded by the EU's Sixth Framework Programme on Research and Development (FP6).

MoniQA is working towards the harmonisation of monitoring and control strategies for food quality and safety assessment, where traditional analytical methods meet new and rapid technologies. The project brings together over 100 institutions (core partners, advisory panel, and associated partners) from 35 countries and 5 continents. Members are coordinating their research as well as sharing personnel and infrastructures. By creating a virtual laboratory for research, establishing joint training and mobility programs, and sharing knowledge, MoniQA will help to ensure food safety and quality in Europe and beyond. MoniQA will thus benefit the food industry – including SMEs – as well as policy makers and, ultimately, the European consumer.

MoniQA started on 1st February 2007 and is funded by the European Union for a duration of five years. In a recent review on behalf of the European Commission independent experts concluded that the project has fully achieved its objectives and technical goals for the period and has even exceeded expectations. In MoniQA's second year we are continuing our work in the same spirit. The MoniQA working groups are currently in the process of drawing up position papers and we have continued and enlarged our mobility and exchange programme. Work also continues on the development of a database for food safety hazards and on the socio-economic impact.

MoniQA in a nutshell:

- Over 400 scientists from 35 countries
- Harmonising global food quality and safety monitoring strategies
- Adding value to the food chain to ensure consumer confidence
- Ensuring effective and efficient food quality and safety regulations within the EU and worldwide

**For further information please take a look at the MoniQA website
(www.moniqa.org) or contact:**

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