

GLOBAL WATER AND FOOD SAFETY SUMMIT
The Hotel at the University of Maryland
November 19-21, 2019

The Power of Genomics-Based Water Surveillance: The Fusion of Food Safety, Water Sampling, and Whole Genome Sequencing Provides Insights into Global Pathogen Detection and Spread

A global scientific meeting is planned for November 19-21, 2019 in order to assemble a variety of international experts in the field to address the impact, importance, and challenges of microbiological sampling of water for food safety and public health. The meeting will be held in College Park, Maryland on November 19-21, 2019 at University of Maryland Hotel (7777 Baltimore Ave, College Park, Maryland 20740 USA). The objectives of the summit include (i) a deeper exploration of how to better maximize and leverage the fusion of microbiological water sampling and whole genome sequencing on a global scale; (ii) to identify and mitigate the scientific and policy challenges surrounding effective water sampling and timely whole genome sequencing analysis of resultant bacterial isolates; and (iii) to ensure that appropriate and optimal collection, isolation, and characterization methods are fully validated and in place to support this global public health endeavor. We will invite approximately 100 participants from international NGO organizations, government agencies, academic institutions, and the food safety industry to the meeting. The meeting will consist of three days of symposia and group discussion panels. Symposia will cover successful examples of microbiological surveillance of water for foodborne and waterborne pathogens, genomic-based pathogen studies from water-associated enteric pathogens, and some discussion around the unique microbiological requirements of sampling and analyzing water and sediments for enteric pathogens. Discussion panels will focus on challenges and hurdles that currently hinder effective sampling and sequencing efforts of water and associated bacteria and viruses. In addition, the meeting will include a break-out session where experts will organize into several long-term workgroups (with chairs and co-chairs) designed to address and solve many of the political and scientific challenges surrounding successful participation in this important work. Such groups may include a political/economic barriers workgroup, an environmental microbiology/field science WG, and a laboratory and analytical WG plus others as needed. Workgroups will convene regularly after the meeting and provide solutions and other data to meeting organizers as they become available for sharing with the entire group. Taken together, the merging of modern field sampling tools and cutting-edge genomic typing approaches has brought about the rare and important opportunity to index and database enteric pathogens like Salmonella across the globe. The expected outcomes of this meeting are many, including the formation of new and important collaborations, enhanced global data sharing as part of a global open source WGS database, insight into the root causes and potential environmental sources of produce contamination as well as contribute to our greater understanding of the risks of pathogen contamination of fresh and fresh cut produce farm systems across the US and around the world.

DATE: November 19 –21, 2019

TIME: Meeting Start Time on the 19th is 8 AM and Adjournment on the 21st is 1PM.

VENUE: The Hotel at the University of Maryland
7777 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740 USA

SPONSORS: The University of Maryland Joint Institute for Food Safety and The Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, U.S. Food and Drug Administration

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