

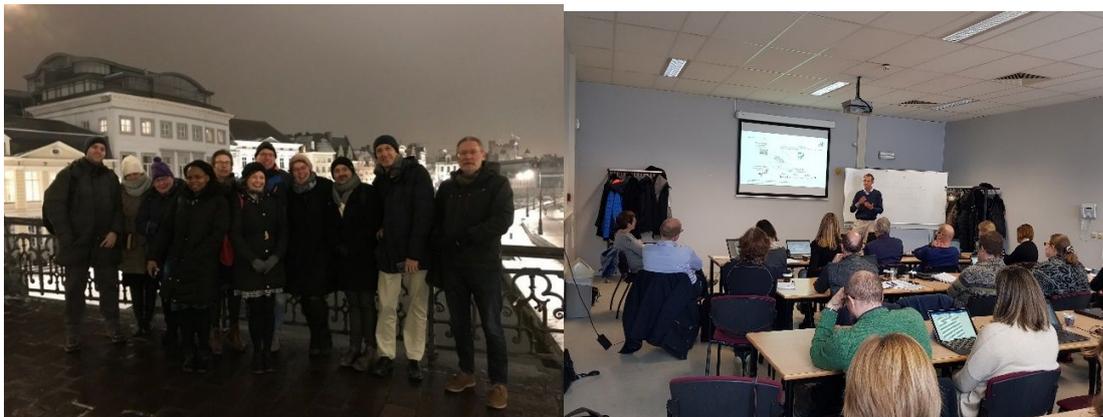


## **Clarifying terminology when talking on 'Human Pathogens' in a in multi-disciplinary research setting of plant production and food safety**

Report of COST Action CA16110 Huplant Control Research & Stakeholders Meeting  
Ghent, January 21-23<sup>rd</sup> 2019

Each research discipline tends to use their own jargon and has its own context when talking with its peers. In a setting, where adherent disciplines exchange information this may lead to confusion in communication. One of the objectives of the Working Group 5 of the HUPLANT Cost Action is to enhance communication & increase common understanding when 'plant' meets 'food' and 'plant microbiota' reveal 'human pathogens'. A two days research meeting and subsequent ½ day discussion with stakeholders was organized and attended by ca. 15 researchers and 15 stakeholders of the HUPLANT Cost Action to exchange and discuss the use of 'appropriate' and 'well-defined' terminology (photo). The research meeting included plant and food oriented microbiologists working in the area of microbial ecology, agricultural production, taxonomy, virulence and pathogenicity of microbes, risk assessment and food safety management. Participants represented the various working groups in the COST Action CA16110 (<https://huplantcontrol.igzev.de/work-plan/>).

The meeting was hosted at the Faculty of Bio-Science Engineering, Ghent University in the beautiful (but at the time freezing cold) city of Ghent.



Photos: (Some) participants of the research meeting enjoying an evening walk in cold Ghent (Jan2019) (left). Joel Pothier presenting outcomes from the discussion to stakeholders (right). Photos by Adam



Schikora, Julius Kuehn Institute, Germany (left) and Gro S. Johannessen, Norwegian Veterinary Institute, Norway (right).

During the research meeting, each participant presented a number of 'terms' he or she from the perspective of his/her Working group within the HUPLANT Cost Action or discipline put forward for definition or further clarification. This included terms such as plant microbiome versus core microbiome, attachment versus colonization, species (identification) versus strain (genotype, phenotype, pathotype), detection versus enumeration, hazard versus risk, etc. After discussion and reflection, the various pieces of the discipline-overarching puzzle of terms (and their understanding) could be put together and a coherent story on the current challenges related to research and management of human pathogens in plant primary production and ensuring food safety, using 'appropriate' terminology, was prepared and next day presented to the stakeholders. Using an 'for all' accessible and common terminology when discussing on plant microbiome, bacterial identification, methods used for determining pathogenicity of isolates or in food testing and ultimately thus coming to evidence-based decision making and risk management was by the stakeholders perceived to be very informative.

The outcome of this Ghent meeting will be further summarized as a position paper to be submitted to FEMS Microbiology Letters and shared with the full HUPLANT Cost Action Management Committee during the meeting in Dubrovnik in April 2019. Further discussion on terminology within the HUPLANT Consortium and its stakeholders will continue in the next year(s) of Cost Action 16110. The final outcome of this WG5 meeting and further work undertaken related to this will be a 'Glossary' and a booklet for students, (young) researchers and stakeholders thus introducing them to the complex world of the plant microbiota and human pathogens in agricultural production and ensuring safety of plant-based foods.

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