

2nd ESAB NEWSLETTER

The Board of the EFB Section on Applied Biocatalysis (ESAB) held her 47^e meeting in Frankfurt (Germany) on September 1 and 2, 2001. A short report is given below.

1. Recent symposia

The symposium “Applied Biocatalysis 1980-2020” in Trondheim, Norway, June 17-21 last, was attended by 62 people. In spite of (or due to?) the small number of participants, the symposium has been very fruitful, with excellent lectures and many opportunities for close contacts between the attendants. Also the organisation was very good.

ECB10 (July 8-11, Madrid), with 5 sessions devoted to Applied Biocatalysis, was attended by about 1400 scientists from many different countries.

BIOTRANS '01 (September 2-7, Darmstadt, Germany) had about 470 participants and was one of the best symposia in the BIOTRANS series. The excellent organisation by Woody Fessner certainly contributed to its success. The organising committee of the BIOTRANS series is not related to ESAB, but both BIOTRANS '01 and its successors are (and will be) organised in collaboration with ESAB. This was agreed upon during a meeting of both parties in Darmstadt.

2. Future symposia

The symposium “Biocatalyst Stability: different levels of observation...” (3rd International Congress on Protein Stabilization) is taking place from April 21-24, 2002, in Toulouse, France. Organiser is Didier Combes, INSA. There are sessions on: Protein folding, protein and/or media engineering; Structural stability; Inactivation mechanisms; Mechanisms of stabilisation; Effect of additives; Covalent processes; Industrial applications. Deadline for posters is 15/1/02, cheap registration can be done until 15/3/02. See for more info <http://www.insa-tlse.fr/gba/biostab>.

From June 16-19, 2002, there is a symposium entitled “Biocatalysis in the Food and Drinks Industry”, to be held in Harrow, North London, UK. Organiser is prof. Chris Bucke. Session topics are: Enzymes in release of vegetable oils, juices, in wine making and in accelerated maturation; Biocatalysts in carbohydrate modification, including oligosaccharide production (prebiotics, functional foods), starch synthesis and degradation; Lipid modifications, ester production; Protein and peptide modifications for functional change (texture, flavour); Ancillary enzymes (e.g. novel analytical methods, time-temperature indicators). The deadline for oral communications is December 10, 2001, for posters March 31, 2002. Abstracts should be sent to: buckec@wmin.ac.uk (Prof. Chris Bucke, School of Biosciences, University of Westminster, 115 New Cavendish Street, London W1W 6UW, UK). Registration costs will be about 215 pounds, lodging + lunches about 175 pounds.

In addition, there are plans for a course on “Directed evolution”, September 2002, in Paris. The organiser will be Jacques Baratti. Possible subjects are: 1. Presentation of the techniques; 2.1 Changing enzyme specificity; 2.2 Changing thermostability; 2.3 Changing other properties, like solvent stability. More details will be announced in subsequent newsletters.

The next BIOTRANS will be held from June 28– July 3, 2003 in Olomouc, Czech Republic, go to <http://www.biotrans.org> and <http://www.biotrans2003.upol.cz>.

3. Website

About 80 people joined ESAB up to now by registering at our website www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/ESAB.HTML.

Maurice Franssen (vice-chairman ESAB)

Jacques Baratti (chairman ESAB)