

PROteINSECT at 'Insects to Feed the World'



Between the 14th and 17th May 2014, the PROteINSECT consortium attended the first ever 'Insects to Feed the World' international conference in Ede, the Netherlands. The conference was jointly organised by the FAO and Wageningen UR to promote the use of insects as human food and as an ingredient in animal feed as a way of assuring food society. Over 450 individuals from 45 countries participated in the conference, representing diverse areas including science, policy and industry.

Why did PROteINSECT attend the conference?

Earlier that week, PROteINSECT held a project meeting in Ghent, Belgium to discuss the work that has been carried out so far. The conference provided the ideal platform to share the latest results from the project with a larger audience. It also enabled us to increase awareness of PROteINSECT and explain how we are contributing to the effort to add insect protein to the permitted list of ingredients for animal feed. In addition to engaging directly with those at the conference, we were also able to promote PROteINSECT more widely via the press and social media outreach. Furthermore, it was an excellent opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with people who are working in a similar area.

What did PROteINSECT do at the conference?

It was important to ensure that PROteINSECT had a strong, visible presence at the conference and this was achieved via oral presentations, posters and the PROteINSECT stand.

a) Oral presentations



PROteINSECT was very well represented in the oral presentation sessions with a total of 7 project members giving presentations over the 3 days of the conference. On the first day, Marc Kenis from CABI discussed the prospects and constraints for the use of insects as human food and animal feed in West Africa. Additionally, Rhonda Smith from Minerva UK gave a presentation on public acceptance of the use of insects in animal feed and food. During this talk, the results of PROteINSECT's recent survey were revealed.

The majority of PROteINSECT's presentations fell on the second day of the conference. In the morning, Adrian Charlton from Fera gave a plenary lecture on the safety and quality issues associated with the use of insects in food and feed. This was followed by a talk by Rosie Pryor from Minerva UK about the legislation aspects relevant to the production and use of insect protein in animal feed.

In the afternoon, Saidou Nacambo from CABI presented an evaluation of a house fly larvae production system in Mali. Specifically, the effect of substrate type on larvae production was discussed. Furthermore, Richou Han from Guangdong Entomological Institute gave a talk describing a system for mass producing house fly larvae for waste reutilisation and as a feed for chickens and shrimps in China.

On the final day of the conference, Bart Muys from KU Leuven gave a plenary lecture on a generic life cycle assessment of protein from insects. Here, the environmental load of several insect production systems were compared with each other as well as those associated with established animal feed protein sources such as soya.

PROteINSECT was one of the few groups at the conference that had a stand in the foyer area. This stand displayed and distributed promotional material, such as leaflets and business cards, as well as having samples of dried insect larvae on display. There was also a large TV showing a slideshow of photos and videos of the project.

The stand was busy during all breaks and provided a great opportunity for interested people to come and talk to PROteINSECT experts and ask questions about the project. Many individuals left their contact details in our visitor book requesting to be kept in touch with the project. Those interested in evaluating PROteINSECT's upcoming engineering contest were also invited to register their interest at the stand. Finally, this area was used to conduct short video interviews with a range of people talking about their experience of the conference and their opinion on the use of insect protein in feed.

d) Outreach communications

The day before the start of the conference, PROteINSECT issued a press release providing information about who from the project would be giving presentations and what topics would be covered. A second press release was issued about the PROteINSECT survey results following Rhonda Smith's presentation, which revealed the key findings. These were published by the trade publications *All About Feed* and *Undercurrent News*. Several PROteINSECT team members were interviewed by journalists throughout the duration of the conference and we expect that more media coverage about the project will be published in due course.

PROteINSECT made good use of the conference's twitter hashtag (#insects2014) and contributed to the 500 tweets written about the conference in total. Twitter was used to encourage people to come and visit the PROteINSECT stand. It was also used to highlight important comments made during presentations as well to share some photos of the edible insect appetisers being served for lunch. Our tweets were retweeted and favoured by other users and we gained many new followers during this time period, whilst simultaneously being alerted to interesting new people to follow.

e) The PROteINSECT engineering competition

PROteINSECT used the conference to launch its upcoming student engineering competition. The project is looking for engineering solutions to one of the most pressing production bottlenecks – the preservation of fly larvae by drying or alternative methods. The competition was advertised at the end of presentations given by members of the PROteINSECT team. Those interested in evaluating the engineering competition were invited to leave their business cards in a bowl at the PROteINSECT stand. More information on the competition will be made available on the PROteINSECT website over the next few months.

f) Excursion to Wageningen University



Several members of the PROteINSECT team stayed after the conference for an organised excursion to Wageningen University. Here we visited the Laboratory of Entomology where we were shown some insects and received a talk on the basics of insect rearing. We also visited the Animal Nutrition group and the Food Quality and Design group where we were given a talk on consumer acceptance and were shown how the fractionation of insects into protein and fat is carried out in the laboratory.

We subsequently changed venue to the Rijn IJssel Vakschool in Wageningen for a presentation from the company New Generation Nutrition about how insects are processed into food products. Finally, we were served lunch featuring dishes from *The Insect Cookbook* including grasshopper wraps and mealworm-topped ice cream cones.

What's next for PROteINSECT?

Now that the conference is over, we have begun sorting through our new contacts acquired via the PROteINSECT stand and direct contact to expand our existing database of useful contacts. Individuals who requested to receive the project's newsletter will be added to our mailing list and we will be in touch with those who expressed an interest in evaluating the engineering competition. New contacts from our targeted stakeholder groups will be considered in preparation for our key opinion leader roundtable meeting taking place in November 2014.

Slides from all of the presentations given by PROteINSECT members are being made available to download from the PROteINSECT website. A full report on the PROteINSECT survey results, which were first revealed at this conference, is also available to download from the project's website. We are also planning to publish our presentations at this conference in the new *Journal of Insects as Food and Feed* due to be launched in 2015.

Acknowledgments

The PROteINSECT team had an enjoyable and inspiring few days at the conference listening to the many presentations and meeting people with a shared interest in the use of insect

protein in feed. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the FAO and Wageningen UR for putting on such a well-organised event and for giving PROteINSECT extensive opportunities to present our work.

Rosie Pryor/Rhonda Smith, Minerva UK

For and on behalf of PROteINSECT www.proteinsect.eu

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