The American Academy of Microbiology hosted a colloquium on **Probiotic Microbes** on
November 5-7 in Baltimore Maryland. ISAPP was one of the sponsors of this event and Dr. Gregor Reid represented the organization in the invitation-only workshop. The event was the idea of Dr. John Cebra from the University of Pennsylvania, but sadly he succumbed to cancer in October, 2005. His legacy was highlighted at the meeting.

**The attendees were:**

Dr. John Bienenstock, McMaster University, Canada  
Dr. Michael Blaut, German Institute of Human Nutrition PostdamRehbrueke, Germany  
Dr. Nico Bos, University of Groningen, Netherlands  
Dr. Rachel Buck, Abbott Laboratories, Columbus, USA  
Dr. John Butler, University of Iowa, USA  
Dr. Simon Carding, The University of Leeds, UK  
Dr. Richard Darveau, University of Washington, Seattle, USA  
Dr. Mildred Donlan, Biological Warfare Defense, USA  
Dr. Joel Dore, INRA, France  
Dr. Chuck Elson, University of Alabama, USA  
Dr. Miguel Freitas, Danone, USA  
Dr. Rex Gaskins, University of Illinois, USA  
Dr. Andrew Gerwirtz, Emory University, USA  
Dr. Jeff Gordon, Washington University, St. Louis, USA  
Dr. Pat Holt, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Perth, Australia  
Dr. Jane Leedle, Consultant, USA  
Dr. Rod Mackie, University of Illinois, USA  
Dr. Andrew Macpherson, McMaster University, Canada  
Dr. Karen Madsen, University of Alberta, Canada  
Dr. Annick Mercenier, Nestle Research Center, Switzerland  
Dr. Tore Midvedt, Karolinska Institute, Sweden  
Dr. Arthur Ouwehand, Danisco, Denmark  
Dr. Eyal Raz, University of California, San Diego, USA  
Dr. Gregor Reid, ISAPP, USA, Canadian R&D Centre for Probiotics, London, Canada  
Dr. Jennifer Ross, FDA, USA  
Dr. Kirsten Rusch, Private Practitioner, Herborn, Germany  
Dr. Volker Rusch, Institute of Microecology, Herborn, Germany  
Dr. Tomoyuki Sako, Yakult Institute, Tokyo, Japan  
Dr. Abigail Salyers, University of Illinois, USA  
Dr. Gerald Tannock, University of Otago, New Zealand  
Dr. Helena Tlaskalova-Hogenova, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague  
Dr. Leda Viera, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil  
Dr. Allan Walker, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, USA  
Dr. Richard Walker, FDA, USA  
Dr. Jeffrey Weiser, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA  
Dr. Carol Wells, University of Minnesota, USA  
Dr. Agnes Wold, Goteborg University, Sweden  
Dr. Kurt Zimmerman, Institute of Microecology, Germany

**Format and outcomes**

Following some introductory presentations, the participants were split into three groups and asked to address a number of questions:
1. What are the consequences of normal flora acquisition?
2. What are the advantages to microflora manipulation?
3. What are the likely mechanisms for beneficial host-microbe interactions?
4. What are the likely mechanisms for beneficial microbe-microbe interactions?
5. Can we rationally identify probiotic candidates?
6. Regulatory issues.

A full report of the meeting will be written and made available on the web and in written form in around 6 month’s time. It would be improper for me to publish a summary of the meeting ahead of the formal report, but in relation to ISAPP, the following comments representing my perceptions, may be of interest.

- The workshop format was excellent, and ISAPP’s model of having experts discuss issues and interact closely, was proven again here to be an excellent means of running a workshop.
- The FAO/WHO definition of probiotics was upheld by the AAM, albeit after some discussion.
- Hot topics included creation and clinical use of recombinant strains; manipulation of the microbiota at birth compared to adulthood; a major need for clinical trials and condition-specific probiotics; use of genomics, proteomics and metabolomics to decipher the impact of probiotics (and prebiotics) on humans; and concerns over regulatory bureaucracy, pace, lack of guidelines and failure to properly adjudicate the area.

**In summary**, I believe this was an excellent forum for ISAPP to be represented. As seen from the list of participants, we did have good representation from people who have actively contributed to ISAPP in the past. Notably, the colloquium identified a number of others who should either be considered for participation in Coleraine, or who in time will become major contributors to probiotic and prebiotic research.

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