

COMMENTARY

1st European Symposium on Phytochemicals in Medicine and Food—Insight into the conference

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Abstract

The University of Belgrade was chosen to host an international conference “1st European Symposium on Phytochemicals in Medicine and Food”, that was successfully held on 7–9. September 2022 in Belgrade, the capital city of Serbia. The main goals of the conference were to promote the scientific achievements of researchers in the field of natural products and their implementation in food and medicine, as well as to bring together well recognized scientists from all around the world and young researchers that are starting their careers in the research fields covered by the conference topics. In that respect 1-EuSPMF fulfilled the expectations of the participants and the organizers.

KEYWORDS

Food and health, Food chemistry

1 | ONSITE EVENT

The first international conference titled “1st European Symposium on Phytochemicals in Medicine and Food” (1-EuSPMF) (<https://1euspmf.rs/>) was successfully held in Belgrade, Serbia on 7–9 September 2022. Belgrade is the capital city of Serbia, situated in South-Eastern Europe, on the Balkan Peninsula, at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers. As one of the oldest cities in Europe, since ancient times it has been a crossing point of the roads of Eastern and Western Europe. Belgrade is the leading city of Serbian culture, education, science, and economy.

The organizers of this scientific meeting were the International Association of Dietetic Nutrition and Safety (IADNS) and Institute for Food Technology and Biochemistry of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Belgrade in Belgrade, and this meeting was supported by the Serbian Chemical Society (SCS) and Phytochemical Society of Europe (PSE).

The conference was chaired by Prof. Jelena Popović-Đorđević (University of Belgrade, Serbia), Prof. Esra Kapanoglu Guven (Istanbul Technical University, Turkey), Prof. Maria da Graça Campos (University



FIGURE 1 Chairman of the 1st European Symposium on Phytochemicals in Medicine and Food (1-EuSPMF)

of Coimbra, Portugal), Prof. Avi Spiegelman (Technion, Israel), and Prof. Goran Kaluđerović (University of Applied Sciences Merseburg, Germany) (Figure 1). The Scientific Committee of 1-EuSPMF comprised 32 outstanding scientists from 16 countries from around the world,

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FIGURE 2 Conference presentations



FIGURE 3 Awarded participants and the Scientific Committee members

whereas the Organizing Committee led by Prof. Miloš B. Rajković and Prof. Aleksandar Kostić (University of Belgrade-Faculty of Agriculture, Serbia), counted nine academic staff. Opening ceremony was conducted by Prof. Jelena Popović-Djordjević with the participation of Assistant Ministry for Science Dr. Marina Soković (Serbia), Prof. Jianbo Xiao (Spain & China), Prof. Esra Capanoglu Guven (Turkey) and the president.

2 | AIMS AND OUTCOMES

The aim of the 1-EuSPMF was to promote the scientific achievements of national and foreign researchers in the field of natural products and their implementation in food and medicine. The demand for high-quality food products that have beneficial effects on human health encourages researchers to intensively study natural products.



FIGURE 4 Conference publication and supporting journals



FIGURE 5 Events at the conference

Moreover, the significance of valorization and obtaining nutritionally significant components from the waste material is gaining substantial attention from the scientific community. In light of these principles, scientists from various fields presented their latest research that pro-

vided an excellent platform for exchanging ideas and setting up new research collaborations.

Within the conference program, nine plenary lectures, 17 invited lectures, nine short oral presentations, and 53 poster presentations

were presented. Plenary lectures and invited lectures were held by distinguished researchers from Serbia (8) and from abroad (18) (Figure 2). The participants from 19 countries presented their works within nine main topics of the conference: I: natural resources of bioactive compounds; II: bioactive compounds and human health; III: medicinal plants and spices; IV: herbal medicines in disease prevention and treatment; V: novel perspectives of phytochemical use in contemporary medicine; VI: farm to fork; VII: natural resources in food industry; VIII: food and agro waste recovery; and IX: analytical methods.

3 | AWARDS AND PUBLICATIONS

Young scientists were awarded for the best presentations by the International Association of Dietetic Nutrition and Safety (IADNS). Hammad Ullah (University of Napoli Federico II, Italy) was awarded for the best oral presentation, whereas Slađana Žilić (Maize Research Institute Zemun Polje, Serbia), Ilija Cvijetić (University of Belgrade, Serbia), and Marijana Simić (Maize Research Institute Zemun Polje) received awards for the best poster presentations (Figure 3). Additionally, six best papers were awarded by the Antioxidants and Horticulturae journals (MDPI).

The Book of Abstracts “1st European Symposium on Phytochemicals in Medicine and Food” with 88 papers was published by the University of Belgrade-Faculty of Agriculture, Belgrade-Zemun. 1-EuSPMF was supported by the international journals: *Phytochemistry Reviews*, *Food Chemistry*, *Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society*, *eFood*, *Food Frontiers Antioxidants and Horticulturae* (Figure 4).

4 | CONCLUDING NOTES

Organizing the First European Symposium on Phytochemicals in Medicine and Food as the onsite event was challenging and exciting at the same time, Figure 5. Furthermore, it was done with great

enthusiasm to bring together well-recognized scientists—experts from all around the world and young researchers who are starting their careers in the research fields covered by the conference topic. With an unselfish help of Prof. Jianbo Xiao, the vice-president of IADNS (University of Vigo, Spain), and a great help of members of the Scientific Committee, members of the Organizing Committee, University of Belgrade (Serbia), Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, enthusiastic volunteers (mainly students), sponsor and donors, the 1-EuSPMF conference was successfully held and it fulfilled my personal expectations as well as the expectations of the participants. Just like the Hawaiian proverb says, “No task is too big when done together by all” (Xiao, 2020).

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

REFERENCE

Xiao, J. (2020). Organizing international conferences: What I have experienced and what are the future challenges? *Food Frontiers*, 1, 352. <https://doi.org/10.1002/fft2.4>

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