

Congratulations to the 2024 Award Recipients



LEON GORRIS Nijmegen, Netherlands

Dr. Leon Gorris is a food safety professional based in Nijmegen, Netherlands, whose career has been dedicated to food safety research and food safety management.

Dr. Gorris was most recently employed with Unilever for 21 years, stationed in The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and China, where he was responsible for food innovation research, food safety risk assessment, risk management, and regulatory affairs. During this time, he also held a special professorship in food safety microbiology at Wageningen University. After leaving Unilever, Dr. Gorris established Food Safety Futures, a consulting firm working for international clients on food safety risk assessment, risk management, and capability building. Prior to Unilever, he served with the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture in Wageningen for eight years in food research and preservation innovation research.

Dr. Gorris has been an active member of IAFP since joining in 1999. He received the IAFP Honorary Life Membership Award in 2022; the IAFP Fellow Award in 2016; and the President's Recognition Award in 2006. Dr. Gorris presented the John H. Silliker Lecture in 2014. He currently serves as Chair of the IAFP Membership Committee and has participated in or chaired the Nominating Committee; the International Leadership Award Selection Committee; and the Fellows Award Selection Committee.

Dr. Gorris is the immediate Past Chair of IAFP's Water Safety and Quality PDG, and a Past Chair of both the International Food Protection Issues PDG and the Modeling and Risk Management PDG. He currently serves on the *Journal of Food Protection (JFP)* Editorial Board and has served on both Management Committees of *JFP* and *Food Protection Trends (FPT)*.

Throughout his membership, Dr. Gorris has supported IAFP by connecting with food safety professionals outside of North America. As Chair of the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe Risk Analysis Task Force, he teamed with IAFP in 2005 to help establish the first IAFP European Symposium on Food Safety in Prague. He served as Chair or was a member of the Organizing Committee for the European Symposium from 2005–2011.

Dr. Gorris is a formally registered, visiting professor in food safety microbiology at three universities in China.

EUROPE STUDENT TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

Geneva
Switzerland
IAFP'S European Symposium on Food Safety
30 April – 2 May 2024



XIAODIE LI

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Leuven, Belgium

Xiaodie Li is a master's candidate in Biochemical Engineering Technology at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven) in Leuven, Belgium, specializing in Biomedical Engineering, where she also received her undergraduate degree.

Ms. Li's food safety research journey officially began during her internship at the Research & Innovation Center of The Coca-Cola Company, where she was actively involved in the predictive microbiology project and developed a comprehensive database from historical lab reports utilized for statistical analysis and AI applications. She continues her journey with The Coca-Cola Company for her master's thesis project, which is centered on devising a protocol to assess the impact of ingredients on the microbiological sensitivity of beverages with a focus on common flavors. Project learning will help to optimize formula design and apply the most appropriate risk mitigation option, ensuring quality and food safety of final beverages.

Ms. Li also participated in the iGEM competition in 2023 and received the silver medal with a project related to upcycling waste cooking oil into the precursor of steroid medicine through a gene-engineered yeast, *Yarrowia Lipolytica*. This endeavor not only showcased her proficiency in predictive microbiology but also enriched her skills by predicting the growth behavior of engineered *Yarrowia Lipolytica*. These diverse experiences have significantly fueled Ms. Li's interest in predictive microbiology, prompting her to contemplate pursuing a Ph.D. program in the future.



FOTIOS LYTRAS

University of Malta
Msida, Malta

Fotios Lytras is a Ph.D. candidate in the Food Sciences and Nutrition Department at the University of Malta (Malta) as well as an early stage researcher as part of the TRANSIT-ITN research project at the university. Within the framework of this project, Mr. Lytras specializes in microbial responses, with a primary focus on quantifying microbial reduction and characterizing molecular resistance mechanisms after Pulsed Electric Field (PEF) technology application.

Throughout his doctoral studies, Mr. Lytras has seized valuable opportunities to enhance his academic journey through collaborative experiences with esteemed partner institutions including the University of Zaragoza in Spain and ELEA Technology GmbH in Germany.

A food microbiologist, Mr. Lytras holds a B.Sc. in Food Science and Technology from the University of West Attica in Greece, and an M.Sc. in Food Technology: Quality Assurance from the University of Reading in the United Kingdom.