



## **FUTUREFOODS AUTUMN SCHOOL 2025**

# **Future challenges and solutions for sustainable food systems**

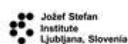
November 19–21, 2025

Food Science & Technology Department,  
Biotechnical Faculty UL, Ljubljana, Slovenia

## **BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**



**BF** UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI  
Biotehniška fakulteta



**Jožef Stefan  
Institute**  
Ljubljana, Slovenia



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## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS, FUTUREFOODS AUTUMN SCHOOL 2025

Future challenges and solutions for sustainable food systems

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PHOTOS BY: Personal archive of participants

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## **FUTURE FOODS AUTUMN SCHOOL 2025**

### **Future challenges and solutions for sustainable food systems**

The FutureFoodS Autumn School 2025 was organized by the European partnership for a sustainable Future of Food Systems together with the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana and Jožef Stefan Institute, Ljubljana, Slovenia. The 3-day programme was designed to immerse participants in the challenges of sustainable food systems through a blend of expert lectures, hands-on innovation, and real-world application.

#### **INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:**

- dr. Nataša Poklar Ulrih, Biotechnical Faculty, UL, Slovenia
- dr. Maša Knez Marevci, University of Maribor, Slovenia
- dr. Luciana Di Gregorio, Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development, Italy
- dr. Jelena Milešević, Center of Research Excellence in Nutrition and Metabolism, Serbia
- dr. Lenka Kouřimská, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, Czech Republic
- dr. Vera Neuzil-Bunesova, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, Czech Republic
- Nina Dremelj, Vesna Venture Capital, Slovenia
- Ema Luna Karara Geršak, Biotechnical Faculty, UL, Slovenia
- Tim Ratajč, Biotechnical Faculty, UL, Slovenia
- dr. Aleš Kuhar, Biotechnical Faculty, UL, Slovenia
- dr. Ana Frelih-Larsen, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Slovenia
- dr. Matjaž Črvek, Emona Research Centre for Nutrition Slovenia

#### **ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:**

- dr. Jasna Bertoncelj, Biotechnical Faculty, UL, Slovenia
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- Marinka Jan, Biotechnical Faculty, UL, Slovenia
- dr. Marjeta Mencin, Jožef Stefan Institute, Slovenia
- dr. Lidija Strojnik, Jožef Stefan Institute, Slovenia

# Autumn School 2025 Programme

Location: Food Science and Technology Dept. (room Ž1), Biotechnical Faculty UL  
Jamnikarjeva 101, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

## Programme outline

Day 1 – Foundation and Problem framing

Day 2 – Innovation and the Hackathon

Day 3 – Application, Synthesis and Conclusion

## WEDNESDAY, 19th November

08:30 – 09:00	Arrival to venue and registration
09:00 – 09:20	Welcome from organizers <b>Nataša Poklar Ulrih, Mojca Korošec (UL-BF) &amp; Nives Ogrinc (JSI)</b>
09:20 – 10:40	Interactive talks (30 min + 10 min discussion): <b>Maarten Uyttendaele, Flanders' FOOD: FutureFoodS: Partnership, Knowledge Hub and Living Labs (<a href="#">online</a>)</b> <b>Lenka Kouřimská, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague: Edible insects as a suitable food and feed protein source</b>
10:40 – 11:10	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15 – 12:35	Interactive talks (30 min + 10 min discussion): <b>Maša Knez Marevc, University of Maribor: Green extraction and formulation technologies with supercritical fluids: Innovations for a sustainable future</b> <b>Vera Neužil-Bunešova, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague: Microbial Degradation of Natural Polymers: A Sustainable Route to Gut Health</b>
12:45 – 14:15	<i>Lunch</i>
14:15 – 17:00	Interactive talks (30 min) and discussions in breakout rooms <b>Topic 1 – Jelena Milešević, Center of Research Excellence in Nutrition and Metabolism, Serbia: Protein diversification, alternative sources of protein for food</b> <b>Topic 2- Luciana Di Gregorio, Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development: Circular and Bio-based strategies in the agri-food supply chain: from waste valorisation to sustainable innovation</b>
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
Free evening	

**THURSDAY, 20th November**

08:30 – 09:00	Arrival to venue and registration
09:00 – 10:25	Interactive talks (30 min + 10 min discussion): <b>Thom Achterbosch, Wageningen University &amp; Research:</b> The FutureFoodS Observatory - tracking progress of the transition to a sustainable food system in Europe ( <a href="#">online</a> ) <b>Nina Dremelj, Vesna Venture Capital:</b> Understanding Business Angels: Who They Are and How They Invest?
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00 – 13:00	<b>FutureFoodS Hackathon</b> Rules and distribution in groups Work in groups
13:00 – 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30 – 15:30	Visit to UL-BF <b>micro plant for insect bioconversion</b> (in campus, 15 min walking distance)
15:30 – 17:00	<b>FutureFoodS Hackathon:</b> work in groups
<i>Coffee break</i>	Brief presentation of ideas to the mentors, commenting, suggestions
18:30 – 22:00	Dinner in <b>Union Pub</b> Location: Celovška cesta 22, Ljubljana

**FRIDAY, 21st November**

08:45	Departure from the hotel lobby (10 min walk to Center Rog)
09:00 – 10:30	<b>Visit to a food company <a href="#">Grashka plant-based deli</a></b> Location: Center Rog, Trubarjeva cesta 72, Ljubljana
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Transfer with public bus to BF UL</i>
11:00 – 12:30	<b>FutureFoodS Hackathon</b> Work in groups, finalisation of presentations
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:00	<b>FutureFoodS Hackathon</b> Group presentations of results and discussion
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:30 – 16:45	<b>Moderated round table discussion</b> Transition to sustainable food systems; is our progress in line with the plans; what is more effective – individual or systemic approach? Discussants: <b>Ana Frelih-Larsen</b> , Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food <b>Matjaž Červek</b> , Emona Research Centre for Nutrition <b>Aleš Kuhar</b> , Biotechnical Faculty UL Moderator: <b>Evgen Benedik</b> , Biotechnical Faculty UL
16:45 – 17:15	Conclusions of the Autumn School and farewell

## EDITORIAL BOARD

### **Mojca Korošec**

*University of Ljubljana, Biotechnical faculty, Slovenia*

Mojca Korošec is an associate professor of nutrition at the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana. Her research combining mentoring master's and PhD students focuses on food composition, quality parameters, and sensory properties of food related to authenticity and acceptance. As a lead or partner, she participates in national and EU projects on the sustainability of diets and food systems. She enjoys integrating traditional foods into new environments. She is chair of the Slovenian hub for food sensory research, an active member of the Sensory Analysis Working Group of the International Honey Commission, and a member of the Expert Group of the EU Honey Platform.



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Prof. dr. Nives Ogrinc, Head of the ISO-FOOD Chair at the Jožef Stefan Institute, is a leading expert in stable isotope applications in environmental research and food authenticity. She received her PhD in 1997 and completed a NATO postdoctoral fellowship at Trent University, Canada (2000–2002). She has published over 200 papers (h-index 44) and received the Zois Award in 2019 for outstanding interdisciplinary achievements. She coordinates the EU projects FoodTraNet and FishEUTrust and holds leadership roles in IMEKO-TC23 and the European Metrology Network for Safe and Sustainable Food.



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Evgen Benedik is engaged in multiple research projects, with a primary focus on how nutrition during the first 8,000 days of life influences longevity and the risk of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other chronic conditions. He is currently leading two clinical trials examining coeliac disease and irritable bowel disease in paediatric populations. He is an active member of the European Society of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (ESPGHAN) and the European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN). Each year, he co-organises the Simčič Symposium with MSc nutrition students, with recordings available on the symposium's YouTube channel.

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## ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTATIONS

### ERA Chair Foodomics

**Nataša Poklar Ulrih**

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#### **Abstract**

The Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana (UL BF) has been successful in the call for proposals of the European Research and Innovation Programme Horizon Europe and has been awarded the ERA Chair – Chair of Metabolomics in food and nutrition (Foodomics) project, which will establish a new interdisciplinary Centre for Metabolomics led by Prof Dr Urška Vrhovšek. The project is coordinated by Prof Dr Nataša Poklar Ulrih from UL BF, and in addition to researchers from UL BF, collaborators from the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics and Faculty of Medicine are also involved. The establishment of the Metabolomics Research Centre will catalyse and accelerate the integration of several excellent and existing research groups working together to create the critical mass of interdisciplinary knowledge needed to improve national food, nutrition and health research. The established network of researchers and professors will also integrate the knowledge generated into the educational process at UL.

**Key words:** metabolomics; food safety

#### **Biography**

Dr. Nataša Poklar Ulrih is a full professor of biochemistry at the Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana. She leads the research program "Biochemical and Biophysical-Chemical Characterization of Natural Substances" and numerous national and European projects (ERA Chair Foodomics, EUTOPIA\_Health). She has published more than 200 original scientific articles. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Fulbright Scholarship, the Golden Plaque of the University of Ljubljana, the Biotechnical Faculty Award, the Lapanje Award for scientific achievements in biochemistry, and the Jesenko Award for lifetime achievement. Her research interest is: interactions of biological molecules (proteins, lipids, polysaccharides) with polyphenolic compounds, development of delivery systems for bioactive molecules, food waste as a source of bioactive compounds, thermophilic archaea and mechanism of adaptation to high temperatures.



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## FutureFoodS: Partnership, Living Labs and Knowledge Hub

**Maarten Uyttebroek**

*Flanders' FOOD, Belgium*

### Abstract

FutureFoodS ([www.futurefoodspartnership.eu](http://www.futurefoodspartnership.eu)) is the European Partnership for a sustainable future of Food Systems. It focuses on transforming Europe's food production and consumption towards more sustainable and resilient systems. One of the main objectives of the Partnership is the installation of a Knowledge Hub. In the presentation, the Partnership will be briefly introduced. Furthermore, the specific role of Living Labs as facilitators and catalysts for technological and social innovation and transformation will be highlighted. Finally, the development of a Knowledge Hub as network for interaction between all multiple helix stakeholders and as interface to accelerate this food system transition will be discussed.

**Key words:** Partnership, Living Labs, Knowledge Hub

### Biography

Maarten Uyttebroek graduated in 2001 as environmental engineer at KU Leuven, Belgium. For about 10 years, he worked as researcher and consultant on contaminated soils at KU Leuven (PhD 2005), ARCADIS and VITO (Flemish Institute for Technological Research). At VITO, he also developed new separation and conversion technologies for by-products from the agri-food industry. In 2019, he started as innovation manager at Flanders' FOOD, the innovation cluster for the agri-food industry in Flanders, in the team of Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems with a focus on the food system approach.



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## Edible insects as a suitable food and feed protein source

**Lenka Kouřimská**

*Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, Czech Republic*

### Abstract

Edible insects offer an attractive alternative protein source for human nutrition and animal feed thanks to low greenhouse gas emissions, efficient feed conversion and the ability to turn low-value by-products into high-quality materials. They provide all essential amino acids, show high protein digestibility and supply lipids with a fatty acid profile between plant and animal lipids. Insects contain notable non-protein nitrogen compounds including purines, as well as some allergenic and antinutritional substances. Nutrient levels vary with species and size. Neophobia remains a major barrier to acceptance, but experience improves attitudes, and hidden forms are generally more accepted.

**Key words:** entomophagy; novel food; nutritional value; neophobia.

### Biography

Prof. Ing. Lenka Kouřimská, PhD is a senior lecturer at the Department of Microbiology, Nutrition and Dietetics, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague. Her research activities are focused on food chemistry and analysis, nutritional and sensory quality with a focus on the nutritional value of edible insects, food safety, and lipid oxidation. She is the author or co-author of 88 publications with IF (WOS citation index 1547, h-index 21). She is the coordinator of the national node within the large European research infrastructure METROFOOD-RI.



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## Green extraction and formulation technologies with supercritical fluids: Innovations for a sustainable future

**Maša Knez Marevci**

*Faculty of Medicine, University of Maribor, Slovenia*

*Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, University of Maribor, Slovenia*

### Abstract

Lately, the demand for different types of high-quality products is increasing. Substantial investigation has been concentrated on fruits and crops containing bioactive compounds. These extra nutritional constituents are present in both plant and animal products, and typically occur in low quantities in foods. At this point, extraction is an important process to isolate the bioactive compounds. Both plant and animal tissues are capable of yielding a variety of bioactive extracts, which can be prepared using a vast array of extraction techniques. Biological activities of the extract highly depend on the extraction procedure and this releases a gateway for selection of appropriate extraction methods. A great deal of interest has been devoted to the extraction of active components from natural sources, aiming at satisfying the increasing request of natural products not only for therapeutic use but also as preventing and protecting agents. Among the large number of active substances in the focus, polyphenols and fatty acids have received particular attention in the last decade. The identification and development of compounds or extracts from different tissues has become a major area of food, health- and medical-related research. Extracts containing these natural ingredients are incorporated into different food, therapeutic and cosmetic products. To overcome the limitations of conventional extraction methods, novel extraction techniques can increase separation efficiency, reduce the use of raw materials, solvents, and energy, and have minimal environmental impact. In addition, the use of “green” solvents, which have numerous advantageous properties, such as being completely biodegradable, recyclable, noncorrosive, noncarcinogenic, and nonozone-depleting, enables the production of extracts that are recognized as safe and preferred by consumer.

**Key words:** Isolation, supercritical fluids, antioxidants, bioactivity, formulations

### Biography

Professor Maša Knez Marevci has published extensively in Chemical Engineering, including 60 original scientific articles and 19 review articles in high Impact Factor journals, co-authored 6 book chapters, and holds three patent applications. Her work has garnered over 3100 citations, resulting in an H-index of 26. She has conducted research on supercritical fluids within national and European projects, such as FP7 Supermethanol and MOSS, and currently leads two basic research projects while mentoring three PhD students. She has been a guest lecturer and researcher at Graz University of Technology, the University of Alabama in Birmingham, and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Her recent research focuses on extracting biologically active substances from biomaterials using sub- and supercritical fluids, isolating substances with supercritical fluid chromatographic techniques, and developing new formulations with various active substances.



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## Microbial Degradation of Natural Polymers: A Sustainable Route to Gut Health

**Věra Neužil Bunešová**

*Department of Microbiology, Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Agrobiological Sciences, Food and Natural Resources, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague*

### Abstract

Prebiotics are substrates selectively utilized by host microbes to confer health benefits. Natural gums, chitin-based substrates, and other biopolymers of plant and animal origin represent sustainable materials with documented or emerging prebiotic potential. Host-beneficial microbes lead to the formation of short-chain fatty acids and other products, which can function directly or enter further interactions. It results in a reduction of the incidence of civilization diseases in humans, as well as improving animal health and productivity. Enhancing the host microbiota may also reduce reliance on antibiotics and other treatments, thereby supporting more sustainable therapeutic strategies.

**Key words:** Prebiotics; Natural Polymers; Gut Microbiota; Host Health; Microbial Fermentation; Short-Chain Fatty Acids (SCFAs); Sustainability

### Biography

Assoc. Prof. Věra Neužil Bunešová, Ph.D. is a lecturer at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague and focuses her scientific activities on the microbiota of the human and animal gastrointestinal tract and food microbiology. She is mainly engaged in genotypic and phenotypic characterization of the genus *Bifidobacterium* and testing their interaction with other taxa. Her research also includes microbial cross-feeding and selection of suitable prebiotics. She is the author or co-author of 68 IF publications (WOS citation index 1185, h-index 18).



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## Protein diversification, alternative sources of protein for food

### Jelena Milešević

*Centre of Research Excellence in Nutrition and Metabolism, Institute for Medical Research, University of Belgrade, National institute of Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, Serbia*

#### Abstract

With rising global protein demand and increasing environmental pressures, diversifying protein sources is critical for building resilient, sustainable food systems. This presentation explores the fragility of current animal-based protein systems and evaluates the nutritional, environmental, and economic potential of alternative plant-based, fermentation-derived, microbial, insect, and cultivated proteins. Scientific evidence highlights their role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving health outcomes, and enabling circular, regionally adapted food solutions for the future.

**Key words:** alternative protein, plant – based proteins, microbial protein, insect protein, cultivated meat, sustainable food systems

#### Biography

Dr. Jelena Milešević is a Senior Scientific Associate at the Institute for Medical Research in Belgrade. She holds a PhD in Food Engineering and has worked with FAO, EFSA, WHO, in EuroFIR AISBL and CAPNUTRA. Her expertise includes food composition, dietary intake assessment and nutrition policy studies. She has coordinated EU Menu dietary surveys in Serbia and is actively involved in major European projects on sustainable food systems and micronutrient health. She is passionate recipe developer.



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## Circular and Bio-based strategies in the agri-food supply chain: from waste valorisation to sustainable innovation

**Luciana Di Gregorio**

*Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development (ENEA)*

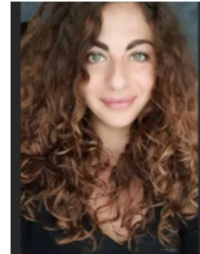
### Abstract

The lecture addresses circular and bio-based strategies for sustainable innovation along the agri-food supply chain, highlighting the integration of green technologies from production to post-harvest. It focuses on the valorisation of agro-industrial by-products and the application of natural bioactive compounds to improve food safety, quality, and shelf life. Selected case studies illustrate research on antimicrobial compounds and active packaging, emphasizing their potential to support resilient, resource-efficient, and environmentally sustainable food systems while promoting circular economy principles.

**Key words:** circular economy, bio-based solutions, waste valorisation, food safety, active packaging, essential oils.

### Biography

Luciana Di Gregorio is a researcher at ENEA (IT), Laboratory of Agri-Food Chain Innovation. Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology with experience in international research environments. She works on food and soil microbiology, focusing on safety, quality, and sustainability across the agri-food system. Her research explores microbial diversity and bio-based strategies supporting circular and resilient food systems. She contributes to national and EU projects promoting *One Health* approaches.



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## **The FutureFoodS Observatory – tracking progress of the transition to a sustainable food system in Europe**

**Thom Achterbosch**

*Wageningen University & Research*

### **Abstract**

The FutureFoodS partnership aims to accelerate the transition to a more sustainable and resilient food system in Europe. An observatory is being established to identify key leverage points for this transition, and to assess the interconnections of drivers and activities with changes in the outcomes of the food system in Europe. Several functions of the observatory are identified: a dashboard for monitoring food systems transition and sustainable food systems (SFS) with indicators at European, national and subnational scale; a network for monitoring SFS with a federated data infrastructure; a toolbox for analyzing the interconnections in the food system; a platform for participatory processes of planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning (PMEL) on policies and investments; and finally a “compass” for co-creation in innovation ecosystems, e.g. in living labs, for aligning actors, strategies and pathways.

**Key words:** Food system, observatory, monitoring, indicators, sustainability, policy targets

### **Biography**

As program leader at Wageningen Social and Economic Research I establish European research programs on food systems transformation, across local to global scales. I engage in action and transdisciplinary research on food policy, innovation policy and finance. I currently lead the Food System Observatory under the EU partnership FutureFoodS and develop knowledge networks on food systems science.



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## Understanding Business Angels: Who They Are and How They Invest?

### Nina Dremelj

*Vesna Deep tech Venture Fund SCSp, Senningerberg, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg*  
Managing Partner | President | Investor | Business Angel

### Biography

Nina Dremelj is the Managing Partner at the Vesna Deep-Tech Fund. Vesna aims to invest in early-stage innovations and exceptional talent, with the goal of transforming them into commercially successful and scalable companies. The fund focuses on intangible assets, such as intellectual property and products, that address the planet's most pressing challenges.



Nina also serves as the President of Business Angels of Slovenia, where she is deeply committed to helping entrepreneurs transform their ideas into successful businesses. Nina is also actively involved with Alita Capital, an investment company that focuses on early-stage ventures, where she invests not only capital but also significant time and expertise. She established daFUND, the first venture capital fund in Slovenia supported by business angels, and she remains an investor in the fund.

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Source: <https://www.startup.si/> (assessed 20. 11. 2025)

## Insect Bioconversion with Black Soldier Fly

**Ema Luna Karara Geršak, Tim Ratajc, assoc. prof. dr. Aleš Kuhar**

*Biotechnical Faculty - University of Ljubljana, Department of Animal Science*

### Abstract

Our project develops a local insect bioconversion system that turns organic side streams into high value-added feed and fertilizer. We test regionally available food production side streams as substrates to rear Black Soldier Flies. We operate digitalized Black Soldier Fly rearing lab to measure the insect bioconversion efficiency, and track larvae and frass quality for feed and soil use. We combine lab data with mapping of local waste flows and feed demand to design site-specific IBK chains that reduce dependence on imported protein and cut emissions. The project brings together farmers, waste managers, feed producers, and authorities in the process of building up a common understanding of the technical, economic, and regulatory needs along the chain.

**Key words: Insect Bioconversion, Black Soldier Fly, Organic Side Streams, Animal Feed, Frass, Circular Bioeconomy**

### Biography of Aleš Kuhar

His multidisciplinary expertise spans agri-food system economics, innovation management, marketing and consumer behavior. He has led numerous projects on competitiveness and sustainable development, collaborating with international institutions and major companies. A strong advocate for applied research, he actively mentors student teams and supports agri-food startups to bridge academia and industry. His passion for food systems spans to experimental tomato cultivation in his high-tech greenhouse. As a “retired” tenor saxophonist he explores complex musical patterns in contemporary jazz music.



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### Biography of Ema Luna Karara Geršak and Tim Ratajc

Ema Luna Karara Geršak and Tim Ratajc are both PhD students. Ema Luna is studying consumer acceptance and behavior toward insect-based feed and food. Tim focuses on developing economic models to compare different scenarios of protein transition. They both work under the supervision of assoc. prof. dr. Aleš Kuhar, who is an agricultural economist specializing in food markets and consumer research. Together they connect consumer research, economic modeling and insect bioconversion trials to design realistic concepts for regional circular agrifood chains in Slovenia.



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## ORGANISING COMMITTEE

### **Jasna Bertoncelj**

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Associate professor at the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She teaches and researches in the area of food quality assessment (macro and micronutrients; food analytical methods; food regulation and legislation), bee products characterization, sensory analysis (sensory methods; sensory analysis with trained panel and with consumers; food acceptability), and nutrition (healthy and balanced diets for various population groups; diet planning; nutrition and health policies, nutrient profiling). She is a member of the International Honey Commission's (IHC) working group for sensory assessment.



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### **Blaž Ferjančič,**

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Dr. Blaž Ferjančič holds a PhD in Life Sciences and is employed as an assistant at the Department of Food Science at the Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana. His research work focuses on dietary fiber and other non-digestible carbohydrates, with an emphasis on methods for determining their content in foods, updating and standardizing food composition databases, and investigating transient adverse effects that may occur with increased intake of dietary fiber. He actively participates in projects related to the development of sustainable dietary systems for people and how to raise awareness in children about food sustainability. In his teaching duties, he instructs students on analytical methods in food science and methods for determining the nutritional value of foods and meals. Additionally, he collaborates with students on the development of innovative foods within the scope of the international student competition Ecotrophelia.



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**Anja Bolha**

*Biotechnical Faculty, UL, Slovenia*

Anja Bolha is a researcher and a PhD student in nutrition at the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana. She received her Bachelor's degree in Food Technology and Nutrition from the same faculty in 2015, followed by a Master's degree in Nutrition in 2018. Her primary research interests include sensory analysis, school nutrition, sustainable nutrition, food reformulation, traditional food products, and diet planning.



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**Marjeta Mencin**

*Jožef Stefan Institute, Slovenia*

Marjeta holds a PhD in Food Technology and specializes in improving the bioaccessibility and antioxidant activity of phenolics from plant materials using bioprocessing techniques such as germination, fermentation, and enzymatic treatment. She also works on enriching foods with bioactive compounds. Her work involves *in vitro* and *in vivo* antioxidant assays, spectroscopic methods and targeted analytical techniques (LC-MS/MS). An important part of her work involves *in vitro* gastrointestinal digestion, and she has experience with a static model of colon fermentation. She is also involved in fatty acid analysis, and the assessment of food authenticity and traceability using stable isotope analysis.



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Dr. Lidija Strojnik obtained her Master's in Food Nutrition in 2014 and completed her PhD at the Jožef Stefan International Postgraduate School in 2022. Her doctoral dissertation with the title: Authenticity and traceability of food and food flavourings using a stable isotope approach was awarded with the Gold Award for the top PhD thesis ("summa cum laude"). Her research focuses on developing and implementing innovative analytical methods for examining food and non-food samples using stable isotope analysis and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS). Her expertise is particularly strong in the analysis of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). She also specialises in database creation and multivariate statistical data analysis.



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## ATTENDEES

### **Barış Uz**

*Ph.D. Student, Istanbul Technical University; Lecturer, Altınbaş University*

Barış Uz is a food engineer and professional chef currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Food Engineering at Istanbul Technical University. Holding a B.Sc. in Molecular Biology and Genetics and an M.Sc. in Food Engineering, his research focuses on food waste valorization and upcycled food development. As a lecturer in Gastronomy and Culinary Arts at Altınbaş University, he bridges scientific research and culinary creativity to foster sustainable food systems.



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### **Bona Yun**

*World Meteorological Organization (WMO)*

Bona Yun focuses on climate-resilient agriculture and sustainable food systems. Her graduate research explored the use of AI-based data analysis to address antimicrobial resistance in food production, emphasizing risk assessment and early detection. Building on this foundation, she now applies her work in international contexts. At the World Meteorological Organization, she supports efforts to integrate climate information into agricultural and energy planning to enhance resilience. Previously, she contributed to World Bank projects examining digital agriculture ecosystems and improving farmer services and market linkages in South Asia and Africa.



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### **Elena Anedda**

*Teagasc Food Research Centre, Dublin, Ireland*

Elena graduated in Food Quality and Safety at University of Pisa and completed a PhD in Food Microbiology at University of Galway and Teagasc Food Research Centre, which focused on antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the primary food production environment. Elena is currently working as a Post-Doctoral Researcher at Teagasc in the food safety area of the Co-Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, a collaborative programme supporting the transition to more sustainable food systems across Ireland and the United Kingdom, where she investigates emerging microbiological risks using omics approaches.



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**Flavien Alonzo**

*National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE), France*

Flavien Alonzo is a research engineer who holds a PhD in numerical analysis. His work bridges data science and applied mathematics with applications ranging from health to food science. His research focuses on integrating food processing constraints into the design of biorefineries, while also contributing to data analysis and modeling efforts. He is currently involved in CLOSECYCLE, an Interreg project which models the valorization of co-products from the cider industry. He also manages his project BOMGOS that uses multiscale modeling to design valorization process in biorefineries.

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**Hajer Ben Ammar**

*Agricultural Institute of Slovenia (KIS)*

Hajer Ben Ammar is a biochemistry researcher with a cotutelle PhD between Tunisia and Italy, currently working at the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia. Her work focuses on plant metabolomics, food safety and crop quality improvement, integrating analytical chemistry, molecular biology and sustainable agriculture. Recent projects include glycoalkaloid quantification in potato and glucosinolate regulation in Brassica to support safer, higher-quality future foods.

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**Helena Raquel dos Santos Fernandes**

*Faculty of Sciences of University of Vigo, Campus of Ourense (Spain)*

Helena Fernandes holds a PhD in Biology (Faculty of Sciences of University of Oporto, FCUP) and is a *Juan de la Cierva* post-doctoral Researcher at the BiotechnIA group of University of Vigo (Faculty of Sciences, Campus of Ourense). Her work focuses on the development of cutting-edge and sustainable valorization pathways of low-values biomasses to obtain functional additives and ingredients for aquaculture feeds. She specializes in using eco-friendly approaches, such as physical, biological and green chemistry, to obtain novel ingredients and functional additives from varied biomasses.

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**Jona de Levita***Arctic Blue Omega 3, Friends of the Earth Netherlands*

Jona holds a BSc and MSc in Nutrition and Health from Wageningen University & Research, specializing in sustainable food systems. She has researched pathways to more sustainable diets and alternative proteins, contributed to the European Week Without Meat campaigns and LIKE-A-PRO project. Currently, she works on sustainable omega-3 development at Arctic Blue, while researching the role of specialized small supermarkets in the food system with Friends of the Earth Netherlands.

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**Lauren McGuinness***Teagasc*

Dr Lauren McGuinness is a sensory and consumer scientist whose research investigates how people perceive, choose, and consume foods. Lauren holds a BSc in Food Science and completed her PhD in Sensory and Consumer Science at University College Dublin (UCD). Her doctoral thesis examined the sensory attributes and global consumer perceptions of “grass-fed” dairy products, combining large-scale cross-cultural surveys with controlled sensory evaluations. This work bridged sensory analysis with behavioural and cultural insights, producing findings that informed both industry practice and public understanding. At Teagasc, Lauren’s postdoctoral research extends her expertise into the intersection of consumer behaviour, nutrition policy, and public health communication. She designs and analyses national surveys assessing awareness, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour related to vitamin D fortification and supplementation. Her work contributes to evidence-based recommendations for improving vitamin D status in the population through consumer-centred dietary strategies. In addition, she develops and facilitates stakeholder workshops to co-design practical policy solutions, bridging the gap between scientific evidence and public engagement. Lauren has acted as a Tutor and Guest Lecturer at UCD (2020–2025), she has served as a Note Taker for the European Milk Forum and was a member of the Local Organising Committee for EuroSense 2024. Lauren has published multiple peer-reviewed papers and presented internationally.

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**Marta Allegri**

*Department of Agricultural, Food, Environmental Forestry and Technologies (DAGRI) University of Florence*

Marta Allegri is a PhD Candidate in Sustainable Management of Agri-Food and Forestry Systems at the University of Florence. She holds a Master's degree with honors in Geography and Landscape Science from the University of Padua. Her research focuses on Mediterranean agri-food and agroforestry systems, agrobiodiversity, rural bioeconomy, circular innovation, and sustainable landscape management within European and FAO-GIAHS projects.



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**Luka Andrić**

*Center for Ecotoxicological Research  
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Luka Andrić is a second-year master's student at the Faculty for Food Technology, Food Safety and Ecology, at the University of Donja Gorica in Podgorica, Montenegro. For a year, he has been employed at the Center for Ecotoxicological Research working in the Balkan area. It deals with food quality control and food safety, as well as testing and monitoring environmental samples. With his engagement as a young researcher on projects, he contributed to improving the sustainability of food production in Montenegro. Throughout his academic and research career, he has focused on establishing sustainable food production chains.

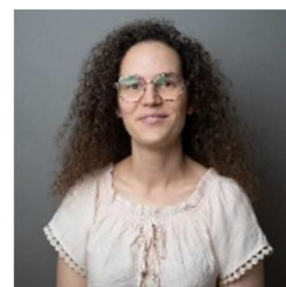


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**Sofia Almeida Costa**

*NOVA Medical School of NOVA University Lisbon*

Sofia Almeida Costa graduated in Nutrition Sciences at the Faculty of Nutrition and Food Sciences of University of Porto (FCNAUP) and obtained her PhD in Public Health at the Faculty of Medicine UP(UI/BD/150785/2020). She was a researcher at Institute of Public Health UP, at University of Coimbra and at FCNAUP, involved in projects of environmental impact of diet, dietary consumption and exposure assessment. Currently is a postdoctoral researcher at NOVA Medical School (SOSFood: Sustainability Optimization for Secure Food Systems, Grant ID: 101134894).



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**Marcos Esau Dominguez Viera***Wageningen Social & Economic Research*

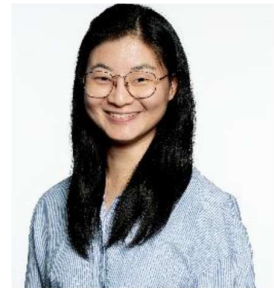
Marcos Esau has experience on long-term trade-off analysis of food systems transformations in Mexico, Vietnam, Jordan and the EU. Marcos has conducted fieldwork to study the economic, cognitive and emotional barriers for healthy food choices among adults and children in Mexico. He held monitoring and evaluation positions in the Mexican Government. Marcos has expertise on CGE modelling, field experiments and microsimulation methodologies. He completed his Ph.D. in Development Economics at Wageningen University and earned a master's degree in economics at the University of Essex.



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**Sherry Stephanie Chan***Researcher, Department of Processing Technology, Nofima AS, Stavanger, Norway*

Sherry Stephanie Chan is a researcher at Nofima with a PhD from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, where her thesis focused on chilling of Atlantic salmon in refrigerated seawater. Her current research areas center on post-harvest processes, including seafood preservation, processing, and packaging technologies to improve quality and extend shelf life. She contributes to projects on sustainable harvesting methods of seawater and freshwater aquaculture species and the utilization of rest raw materials, aiming to reduce waste and promote circularity in the seafood industry.



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**Noemi Giammusso**

*CREA-OFA (Council for Agricultural Research and Economics – Research Centre for Olive, Citrus and Tree Fruit)*

Noemi Giammusso holds a master's degree in Mediterranean food science and technology from the University of Palermo and is a qualified Food Technologist. She currently works in Food chemistry and biotechnology lab at CREA, contributing to research on the valorization and sustainability of the national nut sector, with focus on carob, chestnut, and almond, as well as laboratory analyses and scientific reviews. Moreover, she participates in hop research activities, for which the CBA is the national referent. Her previous experience includes brewing, food labeling, and product quality.



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