

Summary report of my participation in the International Congress of Meat Science and Technology – ICoMST 2012 Montreal, August 12 – 17, 2012

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Overview: The International Congress of Meat Science and Technology – ICoMST 2012 took place in Montreal between August 12th and 17th, 2012. This was a very successful academic and networking opportunity to meet researchers and meat industry representatives from 44 different countries working on the development of this important sector of our economy. Thanks to the support of ALMA and the Alberta Meat Network, I had the opportunity to attend the sessions and exchange information with the scientists and leaders of the meat sector during the development of this world class event.

This summary report presents a short description of the main benefits of my participation in ICoMST 2012 for the cattle and beef sector, and in particular for the members of my organization in Alberta and Canada. If additional information is required you can contact me at the Canadian Beef Breeds Council (Telephone: (403) 730-0350, or Mauricio@canadianbeeffbreeds.com).

Summarized description of ICoMST: The International Congress of Meat Science and Technology – ICoMST 2012 started with a reception at the Hilton Bonaventure hotel in Montreal on Sunday August 12th, and then the event was officially opened with a ceremony on Monday August 13th for a continuous and intense series of presentations, speeches, meetings and exchanges during the whole week until its closure on Friday August 17th.

The program was comprehensive. Each and every day of the week was methodically planned to deliver information in 10 different sessions about recent developments according to the following list of topics of interest:

1. *Nutrition and Health*
2. *Sustainability*
3. *Producing niche markets for fresh meat products*
4. *Animal Welfare*
5. *Biochemistry and Biology*
6. *Safety and Microbiology*
7. *Consumer trends and sensory analysis*
8. *Value added and further processing*
9. *Technology to increase carcass and by-products value*
10. *Hot topics and current issues: in vitro meat synthesis research, Meat and the Environment – Future directions; and panel with experts around the subject: A Healthy World of Meat.*

It is important to highlight that many of those topics included in the list points presented above have been specifically targeted by researchers and meat industry leaders as a result of the interest expressed by the consumers. Also, the challenge for the whole world is huge with the need to supply high quality animal proteins to feed a growing population (expected to be 9 billion people in the year 2050) with limited natural resources (arable land and water).

The consumers want to know more about the benefits and also the challenges brought by the meat sector to human health, animal health and the environment. Also, multiple disciplines (economy, genetics, biology / microbiology, chemistry, animal science, food processing technologies /

engineering, etc.) are required to effectively develop research work in new areas such as animal welfare and its impact in meat quality, the environment, nutrition and safety (e.g. to reduce the level of stress for the animals and the impact on the safety and quality of the meat).

A dynamic program was put in place throughout the whole week to facilitate the review of the posters and the presentations by graduate students and researchers from all over the world, who are generating valuable information for the meat sector in many different fronts. A competition for students took place with prizes for the best posters and the best presentations.

There was never a dull moment. At every coffee break and in between the main sessions there were many rooms where simultaneously the multiple areas of interest to the participants working in the meat sector were being presented and I had the privilege of exchanging information and ideas with many people working on topics of interest for my sector and my organization.

Without being redundant and preventing a long description of the huge amount of information available at ICoMST 2012, it is important to present the following list of 15 areas of research with excellent data presented during the congress and available in the proceedings. In the list presented below I do **highlight in red words** the areas where our beef cattle sector is directly involved:

1. *Meat nutritional composition and bioactives*
2. ***Meat quality – General***
3. ***Animal genetics and meat quality***
4. ***Impact of production practices on meat quality***
5. ***Animal diet and meat quality***
6. ***Carcass composition***
7. *Post-mortem effects on meat quality and biochemistry*
8. ***Animal stress and welfare***
9. *Meat chemistry and biochemistry – General*
10. *Lipid and protein oxidation in fresh and processed meats*
11. *Value added meats, packaging and thermal processing*
12. *Meat safety and microbiology*
13. ***Consumer preferences and sensory evaluation***
14. *Sausage, cured meats and dried meats*
15. *Sodium reduction in further processing*

Finally, it is important to mention that genetics, livestock productivity, meat quality and the economic prosperity of the regions with a vocation for meat (beef/cattle) production are closely related with the research work conducted by the universities, the private sector and the government. But it is also very important to recognize the value of having an international forum where all the individuals working on the development of the meat sector can meet and exchange information and ideas. ICoMST 2012 was a very successful event to accomplish those objectives.

The next ICoMST of 2013 will take place in Izmir Turkey between August 18th and 23rd, and Turkey is now one of the most progressive markets in the world of meat with high volumes of live cattle being imported from different countries such as Australia, USA, Mexico, Uruguay, France, Hungary and other members of the European Union. Canada is still unable to export live breeding cattle to Turkey but the opportunity to network with Turkish scientists will be very helpful in our efforts to support our process for market access.

For further details on the ICoMST program and presentations please go to: [www.icomst2012.ca](http://cmsa-ascv.ca/icomst.html)
<http://cmsa-ascv.ca/icomst.html>

This conference would not have been possible without the many volunteer hours of CMSA members:

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