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## Preface

In his paper “Scared to Death, an anatomy of the Food Scare Phenomenon”, Richard North (Europarlament, Brussels) stated that one of the most pronounced phenomena of the last decade has been the food scare. Indeed, the general perception of the population of the safety of its food seemed to decrease in the same period that the general medical observation was that the public health seemed to increase. Whatsoever, it is a fact that since the 20th century people grow older and older and stay active during a longer period in their life.

One of the causes of this decreased food safety perception is probably the fabulous progress in the quality of chemical analysis: analysts can measure now some previously undetectable or unknown substances and these may turn into a problem or a semi-problem nowadays (BSE scare by cattle, PCB crisis, MPA contamination etc). Food-scandals like the adulteration of infant formula and related dairy products with melanine, causing the hospitalization of more than 50,000 infants and 6 deaths, further decrease consumer confidence in the safety of their food.

In the BENELUX countries, the conferences on residues in food: EuroResidue (6th edition already in 2008) and the so-called Ghent conference (8th edition in 2010) brought and bring together residue chemists from over the whole world to learn and exchange ideas from each other. These conferences contribute to a better under-

standing of food scares and to a better communication with the responsible authorities and surely also with our final ‘customers’, namely the relatively very healthy food-consuming public. The underlying proceedings are a reflection of this.

The EuroResidue VI conference, held in Egmond aan Zee, The Netherlands from May 19–21 was again a big success. Three hundred and seventy participants presented 248 scientific papers (28 orals and 220 posters) and 47 papers were accepted for publication to this journal. The organizing committee of EuroResidue VI is already looking forward to the ‘harvest’ of EuroResidue VII conference!

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