Informal Nutrition Symposium: Digestive Physiology, Metabolic Challenges, and Nutritional Opportunities

Introduction¹,²,³

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Primary Audience: Nutritionists, Researchers, Feed Industry Personnel

Key words: metabolism, gastrointestinal tract, microflora

The PSA Informal Nutrition Symposium of 2004 was instrumental in improving our knowledge about the relationships between the gastrointestinal tract anatomy, physiology, environment, metabolism, and overall animal nutrition. The symposium was held in honor of 4 academic advisors whose names are listed in this introduction.

The 5 speakers provided exciting and new information. Three of the presentations are being published in the journal. The other 2 presentations were oral presentations for discussion purposes. The following is a brief outline of all 5 presentations:

Kirk C. Klasing explored the subject of comparative digestive physiology, nutritional strategies, and adaptation of the digestive system. With the expanding knowledge about comparative genomics, Klasing believes the study of comparative nutrition is an exciting new research frontier.

David J. Sklan’s death shortly after the symposium will leave a void in the study of digestive system defense mechanisms. His manuscript provides an in-depth review and excellent references for the subject.

Juha Apajalahti demonstrated that microorganisms exist in the digestive system as communities; she alerted us that the majority of these microorganisms are not fully identified, and their functions are not known. To meet such a challenge, new, fast, and accurate methods to identify new microorganisms are needed.

Zehava Uni’s presentation addressed the broad area of “Digestion, function, and adaptation of the digestive tract to nutritional changes.”

George C. Fahey’s presentation was specific to mammals and was entitled, “Digestive physiology and metabolic characteristics unique to dogs and cats.”

²This symposium was held in honor of 4 outstanding academic advisors and life mentors. They are: Louis C. Arrington of the University of Wisconsin, Nuhad J. Daghir of the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, Cal J. Flegal of Michigan State University, and Bernard C. Wentworth of the University of Wisconsin.
³The symposium team consisted of Roselina C. Angel, University of Maryland; David F. Calabotta, ANH-Tech; Wilhelm Guenter, University of Manitoba; and Wade Robey, Cargill, Inc.
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