



EU COST Action "Risk-based meat inspection and integrated meat safety assurance - RIBMINS" press release 24-02-2021

## Virtual training school on modernisation of meat inspection and development of meat safety assurance

Modernisation of meat inspection is on the agenda worldwide, and there is a rising understanding that development of **meat safety assurance systems (MSAS)** will be useful to ensure consumer safety in a cost-effective way.

However, to modernise the inspection system, people involved in the area **must learn about the goals** and **processes of MSAS**. Moreover, mutual **trust among stakeholders is crucial** for the development and innovation of future MSAS. A first step is therefore to establish an understanding of the pros, cons and requirements of MSAS. This may subsequently be addressed in future research and development.



Figure 1: Participants' anonymous feedback stressed the inspiring and educative mix of lectures, discussions, networking, and workshops.

Working Group 4 (WG4) in the RIBMINS COST Action deals with the **impact of changes and alternatives to the traditional MSAS.** It was considered a priority for WG4 to bring together young, talented persons involved in meat inspection in Europe to network, learn, discuss, criticize, and be inspired as a way of initiating further exchange and collaboration.

To contribute to this development, a **3-day training school** was organised by WG4 and run in February 2021, introducing the concept of MSAS. The virtual training school was held via MS Teams assisted by **Animalia (Norwegian Meat & Poultry Research Centre)**.

Initially, the training school was planned for June 2020 as a **physical meeting** to be hosted by the **University of Parma**, allowing for up to 15 trainees. However, due to the pandemic situation, which did not allow trainers and participants to travel between countries, the school was transformed into a **virtual format**. This allowed enlarging the number of participants to 50, and even far more applications were received. The selection criteria applied ensured gender balance and a broad representation of different countries as well as **academia**, **competent authorities**, **and food business operators**.





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The program covered wide aspects of **future meat inspection** with emphasis on how to embed this in MSAS. On the first two days, the program included mainly lectures by the trainers. Each lecture was followed by an active discussion with the participants. The **participants showed great interest and commitment** to the proposed subjects, so that in many cases, lively discussions continued in the chat (Fig. 1).

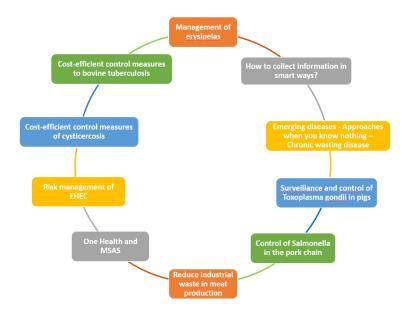
## Maybritt Kiel Poulsen, industry and former CA, Denmark:

"Attending the RIBMINS training school was very inspiring, with engaged and motivating teachers and an open and inquiring atmosphere. The last day's workshop gave me a unique opportunity to work closely with colleagues and I'm sure we will continue our discussions – we just started!"

## Lian Thomas, academia, United Kingdom / Kenya:

"The mix of participants in the training school from academia, industry and government allowed for a great exchange of knowledge and ideas, there was the opportunity to dive deep on some of my subjects of interest while gaining a great overview of topics which were really new to me."

The last day was spent on groups working on specific cases. The aim of the group work was to **activate the participants** to make use of the knowledge taught on Day 1 and 2. All cases were addressing challenges that are currently being debated in Europe (Fig. 2). The groups shared materials and experiences, which allowed them to develop their case and defend their work when challenged by trainers and peers. The groups presented their **arguments and suggestions** in a plenary session in the afternoon.



All training material is freely available at:

https://ribmins.com/training-schoolon-future-meat-safety/ RIBMINS is open to all interested parties and we encourage anyone with a lively interest in meat safety assurance to become a RIBMINS member. Please refer to the RIBMINS homepage for additional information: www.ribmins.com

The aim of the RIBMINS network is to combine and strengthen Europe-wide research efforts on modern meat safety control systems.