



Proceedings of the 33rd Annual Meeting of the Brazilian Embryo Technology Society (SBTE); Comandatuba Island, Bahia, Brazil, August 15th to 18th, 2019, and 35th Annual Meeting of the European Embryo Transfer Association (AETE); Murcia, Spain, September 12th and 14th, 2019.

From the AETE President

Dear Friends, dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to our 35th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Association of Embryo Technologies in Europe. This year we go to Murcia, Spain where we will be welcomed by a fantastic Local Organizing Committee, chaired by Dr Rakel Romar. They prepared a wonderful venue for us with a great social program, starting with a warm Welcome Reception on Thursday evening 12th of September and ending on Saturday 14th with a real beach party. Of course, between these two events a lot of scientific content is programmed as well. We call it “scientific” program, while in real life, we do our utmost best to bring an ideal mix of fundamental science with very applied topics, ready to be used by practitioners and other stakeholders from the field.

The board of the AETE now contains three scientific committee members, focusing on the scientific programs of the next meetings. If you have suggestions, please do not hesitate to advise us. For this year’s meeting we are pleased to announce 4 very interesting keynote speakers. Dr Peter Hansen (Department of Animal Sciences, University of Florida) will expand on the importance of heat stress in cattle breeding and how a changing climate may affect our embryo technology business. Dr Hansen promised us to focus on solutions and valuable advice. His lecture will be generously supported by our main sponsor Vétoquinol. This is of course very well appreciated by the Society. Next, following our yearly tradition, the SBTE will be represented by Dr Felipe Perecin (Faculty of Animal Sciences and Food Engineering, Veterinary Medicine Department, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil), who will speak about cellular interactions between the oocyte and somatic cells. Also Dr Perecin promised us to provide sufficient hands-on advice translated from the great fundamental knowledge he and his team generated over the years. The intense collaboration between AETE and SBTE is very well appreciated by the board and all members. As you know, this year we jointly publish already for the fifth time our abstract proceedings and invited lectures in *Animal Reproduction*. At the Affiliated Society meeting at IETS, this collaboration and joint publication efforts between AETE and SBTE were mentioned and really appreciated.

Dr Olli Peltoniemi (Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Helsinki, Finland) will, as a third invited speaker, expand on recent advances in reproductive management and biotechnology in the pig industry. Our fourth speaker, Dr Sylvie Chastant (National Veterinary School of Toulouse, France), will speak about the importance of inflammation and disease on the quality of the oocyte and the embryo and on reproductive performances.

Next to the invited speakers, we will have more than 15 short oral presentations. Furthermore, I can already tell you that more than 30 abstracts were submitted in the Student Competition section. Only a shortlist of the best 5 abstracts will be selected to be presented during the meeting in our prestigious Student Competition session. In total, this year, we have about 110 abstracts submitted.

As every year we will have two interactive workshops. The first workshop will focus on the ethical aspects of our embryo technology sector. The importance of public opinion is growing and we should, as a society, prepare ourselves and formulate a strong opinion. This workshop will be chaired by Dr Roger Sturmey (Hull-York Medical School, Hull, UK). The second workshop will be moderated by Dr Zvi Roth (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel) and focuses on the practical aspects of heat stress in our embryo technology business. How can we anticipate and avoid the negative effects of climate change.

The highlight of our meeting in Murcia is of course the AETE Pioneer Award. It is a great honor for all members of the AETE board, and for me personally, to present Prof Dr Poul Hyttel (Department of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen, Denmark) as the 2019 AETE Medalist winner. Since 1990, he has been the Professor of Anatomy at the Department of Anatomy and Physiology at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University; now Department of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (DVAS), Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences at University of Copenhagen. Poul Hyttel’s current research activities are directed towards pluripotent animal and human stem cells and in vitro embryo production. A fully equipped stem cell laboratory approved for genetically modified cells has been established at DVAS. The major contemporary projects focus on (1) establishment of human patient-specific neural in vitro cell models (“microbrains”) for modeling of neurodegenerative disorders by the use of induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSC); (2) establishment of animal iPSCs for the development of the domestic animals as a translational model for iPSC-based cell therapy; and (3) in vitro production of bovine embryos, where the technologies for oocyte maturation, fertilization and embryo culture in vitro are optimized and genomics is applied for precise selection of high quality embryos. He has authored more than 280 refereed international articles and has been the principal supervisor of more than 40 PhD-students and postdocs. In 1997-1998 Prof. Hyttel was President of the International Embryo Transfer Society, in 2011 he was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa at University of Antwerp, Belgium, in 2015 he was knighted 1st Class Order for his services to Denmark, and in 2018 he was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa at Estonian University of Life Sciences, Tartu, Estonia.

And finally, we cannot underestimate the great importance of our Sponsors in our Society. We are very grateful to (20 May 2019):

Main: [Vetoquinol]; General: [Ceva Santé Animal]; Exhibitors: [imv TECHNOLOGIES] [EGG TECH] [ivf BIOSCIENCE] [IVF tech] [Minitüb] [PETS] [CONTROLTECNICA Instruments] [SPARMED APS] [ART Lab Solutions] [SCR Europe srl] [WTA] [REPBIOTECH Marie-Sklódowska Curie ITN]; Supporters: [IVI Murcia]

Stay with us for the latest updates on the program at www.aete.eu and I hope to welcome you all in Murcia.

Jo Leroy
President of the AETE