Research area 2: Diet and Food Production

Joint Action: Biomarkers for nutrition and health

FOODBALL – The Biomarker Alliance

WHAT:

Biomarkers covering several foods and food components provide an objective measure of actual intake and status, and are an important and urgently needed adjunct to classical food consumption assessments. However, only a few foods are currently covered by validated intake biomarkers. The Food Biomarker Alliance (FOODBALL) proposes to carry out a systematic exploration and validation of biomarkers to obtain a good coverage of the food intake in different population groups within Europe.

WHO:

The FOODBALL consortium includes 22 partners from 11 countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and The Netherlands). A partner from New Zealand is an observer in the project. The FOODBALL project management is under the responsibility of a coordination team: Edith Feskens (NL) is elected as coordinator.

HOW:

Through a systematic exploration and validation of biomarkers, the FOODBALL project aims to obtain a good coverage of the food intake in different population groups within Europe, by applying metabolomics to discover biomarkers; exploring use of easier sampling techniques and body fluids; revising the current dietary biomarker classification and developing a validation scoring system; applying these on selected new biomarkers; and exploring biological effects using biomarkers of intake.
The FOODBALL provides a unique platform for sharing knowledge and resources within and beyond the project with the scientific community. Biomarkers are very costly and knowledge-intensive. The consortium has wide access to samples and data from large cohorts and dietary interventions with specific foods. This project, combined with other initiatives within JPI HDHL, enables access to 54 human intervention studies on > 14 000 men and women from 8 – 95 years of age, all with biobanks accessible to FOODBALL. This allows the consortium to create a whole new toolbox for dietary assessment. Consolidation of the recourses and knowledge may be accomplished through JPI HDHL Joint Action ENPADASI.

WHEN

The FOODBALL consortium runs for three year from December 2014 to December 2017.

FUNDING

FOODBALL is part of the JPI HDHL Joint Action Biomarkers in Nutrition and Health and is funded through a virtual common pot model. It receives approximately 4.4 million of funds through funding organisations of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and The Netherlands. Besides FOODBALL, the consortium MIRDIET is also funded through the JPI HDHL Joint Action Biomarkers in Nutrition and Health.

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