

Foreword

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This special issue is dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the Centre de Recherche en Sciences et Technologie du Lait (STELA Dairy Research Centre) of Université Laval. Research papers and a review paper covering the main STELA's research topics have been collected on that occasion.

Founded in 1985, the STELA Dairy Research Centre gathers 16 professors and research scientists, research professionals, postdoctoral students, and 70 graduate students (M.Sc. and Ph.D.). It is the most important research team in dairy science and technology in Canada, recognized for its expertise in fundamental and applied research. The STELA's mandate is:

- To pursue the advancement of fundamental knowledge on milk;
- To provide training for highly qualified researchers;
- To encourage the transfer of knowledge and technology to users.

Its research program is oriented towards milk components and contaminants, processes, nutrition, and human health. The research center is composed of university professors and scientists from various fields such as animal and food science, microbiology, nutrition, and food engineering thus ensuring a multidisciplinary approach.

From the very beginning, the Dairy Research Centre formed an industrial liaison office to facilitate and encourage collaboration between researchers and industry. The office sets up university–industry research projects and promotes results and research expertise throughout a newsletter and a biennial symposium. Partnership with the Canadian dairy industry is the key to the STELA's success.

Since 2006, STELA is part of the Institute of Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods of Université Laval which applies scientific knowledge to develop nutraceuticals and functional foods that improve human health through interdisciplinary research, education, technology transfer and communication.

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To celebrate this 25th anniversary, the liaison office organized several activities, such as scientific conferences on nutrition issues and the future of dairy science and public scientific popularization activities with students. A booklet on the historical milestones was published and launched in May 2011 at the STELA Symposium. In 2010, Laval University recognized Dr Jean-Louis Maubois's accomplishments in dairy science by awarding him the title of Doctor *Honoris Causa*. Dr. Maubois accepted to sign the preface of this special issue.

Several STELA's research scientists participated in this special issue of Dairy Science and Technology and this has been a natural choice as several STELA's researchers are active member of its board of editors.