



IIIT-Delhi organizes a symposium on Computational Gastronomy

“The emerging data science of food, flavors, and health”

New Delhi, 8th December 2018: With an objective to create an ecosystem of chefs, scientists, medical professionals, and culinary enthusiasts working on 'data-driven food innovations, Center for Computational Biology at IIIT-Delhi organised a symposium on “Computational Gastronomy: The Emerging Data Science of Food, Flavors, and Health” on Saturday (8th December 2018). Chef Manjit S. Gill (President, Indian Federation of Culinary Associations), Jaspal Sabharwal (TagTaste), Dr. Ganesh Bagler (Complex Systems Laboratory, IIIT-Delhi), Prof. Gurmeet Singh (Head, Centre for Ayurveda Biology and Holistic Nutrition Trans Disciplinary University), Prof. Mitali Mukherjee, Chef Y B Mathur, Director at Culinary Design and Application Group & Chef Akshay Malhotra (Executive Chef, ITC Welcome Hotel, Dwarka, New Delhi) were the principal speakers in the event.

The ‘Symposium on Computational Gastronomy’ is a sincere attempt of IIIT-Delhi to promote this emerging interdisciplinary science involving culinary data collection and curation, data analytics, machine learning, natural language processing, and pattern mining.

Mr. Jaspal Sabharwal presented the keynote talk on “Building Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound” while highlighting the role of data-driven strategies in revolutionizing the food and beverages sector. Veteran Chef Manjit S. Gill passed his message to the participants and inspired them for keeping abreast with new age technology and following sustainable cooking practices. Dr. Ganesh Bagler delivered the pioneer talk to describe the serendipitous discovery of characteristic food pairing pattern in Indian cuisine from his lab and subsequent advances achieved in world cuisine analysis, FlavorDB mobile app, health impact of foods and taste prediction.



Attendees also enjoyed the panel discussions by Chef GissurGudmundsson, Shri GyanBhushan (Incredible India - Ministry of Tourism), Chef Arun Chopra, SabyasachiMukhopadhyay (IISER Kolkata), Amit Lohani (Convener FIFI) & Prof. Prathap Kumar Shetty, Head, Dept of Food Science and Technology, Pondicherry University, led and moderated by Dr. Ganesh Bagler.

Other eminent personalities who added grace to the event with their eclectic presence were Rakesh Banga (Forum of Indian Importers), Kuldeep Jayaswal (Scientist, National Research Centre for Onion and Garlic, Pune), Dr. Sherry Kurian (AIMS Institute, Bangalore) and Vikas Chawla (CEO, Core Hospitality Solutions).

Dr. Ganesh Bagler, the proponent of Complex Systems Laboratory at IIIT-Delhi has been on the forefront of this emerging data science and has contributed to its foundation via pioneering integrative studies in food pairing, culinary fingerprints, flavor percepts and health impacts of food, other than creating data repositories for flavor molecules (FlavorDB), food-disease associations (DietRx, SpiceRx) and recipes from across the world regions.

While addressing the audience, Dr. Ganesh Bagler, said, “*Computational Gastronomy has the potential to transform the global food landscape and can be effectively leveraged for better health and nutrition through an array of culinary application(food design, food-beverage pairing, novel recipe generation, disease-specific culinary recommendation, dietary interventions, flavor combinations, taste prediction, etc.) apart from providing valuable insights into the principles of culinary sciences. Such advances are expected to set new trends in various allied sectors including food, health, hospitality, and tourism.”*