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## **Executive Summary of the IAB Report**

From October 20 to 24 2008 an international advisory board (IAB) carried out an evaluation of 31 research groups in LMC. The board was headed by Dr. Einar Risvik, Nofima Food, Norway, and consisted of 13 esteemed scientists from European research institutions.

It is the opinion of the IAB that during the past fifteen years Danish food research has developed from a large number of separate small research groups to become an entity with distinct world class qualities, attaining great visibility in European and global food research.

The IAB was in general impressed by the level of research found in the 31 evaluated groups. The fact that LMC now covers the total food science area in Denmark with strong multidisciplinary links makes it a unique structure for interaction and collaboration. This unique structure will also provide a communication platform with a great potential for societal and political influence on the strategic research agenda.

The IAB has acknowledged that world-leading science is carried out in several groups, some show high international class, and others are in very good progress. The overall impression is that the achievements of current LMC activities are very positive.

The changing of the university structure has made the role of LMC significantly different compared to the evaluation in 2005. The new structure may create a situation with several competitive rather than collaborative elements. Furthermore LMC has no longer funds available for direct sponsoring of research. The IAB therefore considers LMC to be at a turning point and that there is an urgent need to reconsider of the role of LMC.

One of the core strengths in LMC is the fully integrated value chain in education and research from basic science and technologies to nutrition, health and consumer science. This is a genuine strength of Denmark compared to the rest of the EU and has provided the LMC participants with a true competitive edge and given rise to large scale networking in exciting new projects, bringing Denmark to the forefront of Food Science.

The fragmented food research sector needs strong cohesion in order to communicate well with the stakeholders. At this point LMC has a very important role as a coordinator for common strategy development, network building and collaboration in order to influence opinion leaders.

In addition to the coordination effort the IAB also identified a need for an enhanced integrated and collaborative research program. LMC should play a role in securing more funds for research and education for example in the form of long-term Public-Private Partnership to be located among the universities and still involving all of them. Also representatives from the Danish industry acknowledged the impact of the LMC on Danish food research in the past, but recognized that LMC needs reconsideration.

Collaboration in the field of education is already quite well established, but there is still a need for this. In order to get the best programs the IAB suggests LMC to consider:

- 1) Common or co-ordinated marketing of the programs
- 2) Distinct profiles linked to strengths at the mother university
- 3) A generic BSc programme that enables switching among three MSc programmes in Food Science

The recruitment of international PhD students has increased greatly since the last evaluation, but it is important to ensure a balance between foreign and national recruitment. LMC has to ensure that all food-related PhDs obtain core competences.

Participation of the LMC members in EU Framework Programs has increased and is now at a satisfactory level. Attracting support for larger programs may be a future goal for LMC as Danish food research to a high degree is based on national funding with too many short-term projects. The researchers thus spend a lot of time looking for further funding. The panel is concerned whether LMC will be able to keep the very best researchers in Denmark and to invest in new up-to-date equipment due to the prevailing situation of competitive short term funding.

The IAB finds that there is a need for expanding the interface between health and food to include health science/medicine to cover the breadth of food-nutrition-health. IAB also recommends a national collaboration in meat science particularly in the educational field. Such a collaboration will bring Denmark in the forefront of meat science and education in Europe and most likely to be one of the most central actors in the world.

#### *Recommendations for LMC*

- Enhance integrated and collaborative research by establishing a core pot of money through a public-private partnership (government, industry and universities)
- Assist stakeholders to link with relevant government/national bodies
- Organise national cross sector networking events
- Involve researchers in setting the national food research agenda
- Lobby for funding towards larger/longer, coherent and more directed research programs
- Ensure that Food Science & Food Processing Technology receive significant attention
- Ensure that all food-related PhDs obtain core competencies
- Coordinate the building-up of food related MSc programmes with individual profiles

#### *The research groups*

More than half of the research groups were classified as being of international standard, either world class or European class, see annexes 1-2 for further details.

#### *Annexes*

Annex 1: Evaluation of the individual research groups – in brief

Annex 3: Facts about LMC

Annex 4: Students in Food Science – status as of 2008