

How are impurities modified during the food production process?

Food chemist Professor Peter Fürst receives the Maria Sibylla Merian Fellowship from the BfR

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The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has awarded Professor Dr Peter Fürst with the Maria Sibylla Merian Fellowship. The internationally renowned food chemist has been collaborating with the BfR for many years and has provided a wealth of valuable expertise. The fellowship, which began on 25 April 2023, will allow him to expand this role and devote himself to research questions about the behaviour of undesirable substances and their transformation products along the food chain. These include, amongst others, areas such as the development of new chemical analytical methods as well as replacement and supplementary methods for animal feed experiments.

Professor Fürst's many years of collaboration with the BfR include, amongst others, areas such as the group of organochlorine compounds (dioxins) and a wide range of other, undesirable substances. He has consulted with the BfR in various areas and worked as an expert in several BfR commissions and their committees. With his analytical expertise, he has also helped in the establishment and expansion of selected national reference laboratories (NRL) at the BfR.

The institute values Professor Fürst as a constructive participant in technical dialogue and panel discussions in the context of the BfR's forums. His significant specialist contributions have also led to the success of joint events between the BfR and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV).

Born in Flensburg in 1953, the doctor of food chemistry worked for almost 38 years at the Chemical and Veterinary Testing Office Münsterland-Emscher-Lippe (CVUA-MEL) and its predecessor institutions in Münster. Since 1995 he has also held the lectureship "Chemistry and Analysis of Pesticides and Environmental Contaminants" at the Institute for Food Chemistry at the University of Münster in Westphalia. From 2006 to 2015 he was also a member of the EFSA Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM Panel) and has been a member of the EFSA Panel on Additives and Flavourings (FAF Panel) since 2018.

The Maria Sibylla Merian Fellowship allows the BfR to promote the transfer of knowledge between internationally renowned scientists and researchers at the BfR. The name pays tribute to the natural scientist and artist Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717), who stood out thanks to her extraordinary pioneering spirit in the field of bioscientific research at the turn of the 18th century. Merian's independent scientific achievements are a model for the BfR's work in the field of consumer health protection.

Other senior fellows are Professor Malcolm Macleod (University of Edinburgh), Dr. Valérie Fessard (French authority for food safety, environmental protection and occupational safety, ANSES), Professor Hans Schenkel (University of Hohenheim) and Professor Daniëlle Timmermans (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam).

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Further information about the BfR Fellowship Programmes is available on the BfR website:

https://www.bfr.bund.de/en/fellowship_programmes-202754.html



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About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). The BfR advises the Federal Government and the German federal states (“Laender”) on questions of food, chemicals, and product safety. The BfR conducts independent research on topics that are closely linked to its assessment tasks.

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