

Post Conference Report of Shelf Life International Meeting 2014

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The Shelf Life International Meeting (SLIM) is an informative, educational, and high-quality research conference that brings together packaging professionals from around the world to share research results, to network, and to learn the latest science and technology related to shelf life. SLIM is the acronym for Shelf Life International Meeting, the biennial conference organized by the GSICA - Italian Scientific Group for Food Packaging.

The event is an important meeting occasion for specialists in the field and offers the possibility to weigh up the status of Italian and international scientific research concerning the actual problems connected with food shelf-life.

The SLIM 2014 (sixth SLIM edition) was held on June 11-13, 2014 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA at the Heldrich Hotel and chaired by Prof. Kit Yam from Rutgers University. This edition is organized by the GSICA in collaboration with the Rutgers University: Department of Food Science, and Packaging Engineering Program Michigan State University. The scientific value and importance of this conference is officially recognized by the Scientific Committee for Expo2015. This was the first time that this conference be held in the United States. Previous conferences were held in Italy, Spain, and Korea.

The 2014 SLIM conference, included speeches related to the packaging and the shelf life of the foods. Each edition of this conference had a main theme, where Packaging Sustainability, Innovation, and Shelf Life were three main themes. Although the concept of sustainability has gained much attention from the industry and the society, the concept and especially its practical applications for packaging are not well understood. This conference provided a forum for the presenters and attendees to share their recent research findings and developments for packaging sustainability. Recent developments of innovative technologies have shown great potential to improve the safety and quality of food, healthcare, and other products. Moreover, this conference provided a forum for the attendees to learn the principles and applications of these technologies and for the researchers to share ideas for further development.

More than a hundred researchers from all over the world

attended to this event. Almost thirty presentations addressed various issues of the shelf life, including sustainable packaging, new packaging materials, shelf life testing, modeling and extension. There were main speeches by Prof. Yam from Rutgers University, Prof. Horst-Christian Langowski from Technische Universitaet Muenchen and Prof. Joseph Hotchkiss from Michigan State University. In his presentation, Prof. Yam reviewed the concept of sustainability with more details on packaging sustainability. Moreover, a framework to bring the current concept of packaging to a deeper and more practical level is proposed. More important to the audience of SLIM 2014, this framework also shows the relationship between packaging sustainability, shelf life of food, functions of packaging, and the science and technology of the food packaging. Also, he discussed the other researcher's expertise can play an important role in the active packaging sustainability at a higher level. The research progress in packaging sustainability is presented by Prof. Hotchkiss. This presentation discussed the need for assessing the impact of switching from petrol-based materials to the emerging bio-based materials, particularly the need for further research on objectively assessing the new technologies is emphasized. The requirements and current deficiencies of freshness indicator is presented by Prof. Langowski.

In this conference around thirty oral presentations and 38 poster presentations, presented. The 2014 SLIM conference has held in three main sections. They were structured around the following topics:

- **Packaging Sustainability**

- Research to improve packaging sustainability
- Practical strategies to improve packaging sustainability
- Designs for sustainable packages or systems
- Case studies and success stories

- **Packaging Innovation**

- Active and intelligent packaging
- New packaging materials
- New packaging technologies
- New processing technologies



< 2014 SLIM conference held in New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA >

• **Shelf Life Testing, Modeling, and Prediction**

Computer software for shelf life prediction
 Non-invasive analytical techniques
 Shelf life of food, healthcare, or other products
 Quality and risk management

The following is a partial list of the speakers for this conference who have extensive experience in the area of shelf life, packaging and sustainability. Professor Stefano Farris, University of Milan, Italy; Professor Hae Chang Gea, Rutgers University, USA; Professor Joseph Hotchkiss Michigan State University, USA; Dr. Lihan Huang, USDA Eastern Regional Research Center, USA; Professor Horst-Christian Langowski, Technische Universitaet Muenchen, Germany; Professor Dong-Sun Lee, Kyungnam University, Korea; Dr. Nazir Mir, MirTech Inc., USA; Professor Cristina Nerin, University of Zaragoza, Spain; Dr. Gregory V. Pace, Sun Chemical Corporation, USA; Professor Luciano Piergiovanni, University of Milan, Italy; Dr. Sunil Saran, Amity University, India; Professor Kit Yam, Rutgers University, USA.

The excellent response from the sixth edition of SLIM in New Brunswick, New Jersey last June, has exceeded expectations of either event organizers and participants. Specifically was particularly really appreciated the poster session because of its high level technical and scientific content.

Here is the list of winners of “Poster awards” offered by Elsevier:

- Properties of Green Bionanocomposite Films Prepared from Microfibrillated Cellulose (MFC) and Pullulan, received by the University of Milan, Italy
- Electrospun Fiber as Hexanal Carrier to Extend Shelf-Life of Cherries, received by S.D.F. Mihindukulasuriya,

University of Guelph, Canada

- Application of Parameter Estimation to Predict Migration of Antioxidant Films, received by Hayati Samsudin, Michigan State University, USA and University Sains Malaysia

Most of the presentations of this conference were provided by professors, who is teaching and working on the field food science and packaging. Moreover, the topics of presentations covered a wide range of topics related to the food packaging.

The atmosphere of the conference was scientific and still friendly, and the air was thick with science. I’ve included some pictures below from the presenters in SLIM 2014. At the end, I want to mention about very warm, joyful time at a Gala dinner in the Chinese restaurant.



< Oral presentation in SLIM 2014 conference >