

RESULTS OF A DISCUSSION ABOUT TECHNICAL PROBLEMS IN TAXONOMIC RESEARCH ON  
FLAVOBACTERIA AND CYTOPHAGA-LIKE BACTERIA

The participants of the symposium felt, that an exchange of results and ideas between the two groups of investigators working with flavobacteria on the one side, and with Cytophaga-like bacteria on the other, could potentially be very useful and stimulating for both sides, particularly as the borders between some of these bacteria tend to vanish. Closer contacts within each group of microbiologists, and between the two, would be highly desirable.

To promote such contacts it was proposed, a) to start a Newsletter on Flavobacteria and Cytophaga-Like Bacteria, and b) to repeat meetings of the kind just concluded from time to time. Dr. O.B. Weeks from Las Cruces, New Mexico, kindly took over responsibility for compiling and distributing the Newsletter."

A serious problem experienced by all taxonomists is the availability of reference specimens. Today type strains of all valid taxa of microorganisms are required to be deposited at a culture collection, whenever this is feasible, and are thus generally accessible. In contrast, interesting and even important strains, which appear in the course of a taxonomic study but represent only unnamed or preliminary phena or taxa, are in constant danger of getting lost, and are often no longer available even a short time after publication of the results of the study. It was therefore proposed to start temporary collections which are to preserve all organisms representing certain types, phena, or clusters during the period in which the classification of the respective bacteria is being worked out. This would guarantee that future investigators could continue at exactly the point where an earlier investigator has stopped. Drs. Holmes and Owen promised to inquire whether the collection of flavobacteria could be kept at NCTC in London, while Dr. Claus agreed to take care of the collection of Cytophaga-like bacteria at the DSM (German Collection of Microorganisms) in Göttingen.

H. R.

"The untimely and sudden death of Dr. Weeks prevented him from organizing the Newsletter. There was, however, a note from him in the January 1981 issue of ASM News announcing the newsletter. Microbiologists from many different places had already signaled their interest, and quick action was mandatory. We are indebted to Dr. R.J. Owen that he agreed to step in and to take care of the Newsletter, at least for the time being. Dr. Owen is in an excellent position to handle the Newsletter, as he is a well-known specialist for flavobacteria, will be co-author of the Flavobacterium section in the new Bergey edition, and his laboratory at NCTC will probably be responsible for the planned reference collection of flavobacteria. Persons interested in contributing to, and in obtaining the Newsletter should contact:

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