FST290 Fall 2022 Seminar Series



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Tapping into the metabolic and functional potential of lactobacilli in fermented foods

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Maria Marco received her PhD. in Microbial Biology from the University of California, Berkeley. She joined UC Davis in 2008, where her research focuses on fermented foods, probiotics, and food and gut microbiomes. Her laboratory emphasizes studies on the genetics, ecology, and functional properties of lactic acid bacteria.

SUMMARY: Lactic acid bacteria are essential for making fermented foods and are beneficial inhabitants of intestinal microbiomes. These microorganisms are also remarkably diverse, even at the strain level. Our recent studies have shown how lactobacilli and other lactic acid bacteria perform a hybrid, energy-conservation metabolism incorporating features of fermentation and respiration using extracellular electron transfer (EET). This electrogenic metabolism has the potential to alter inter- and intra-specific microbial interactions in foods and digestive tracts and the sensory attributes of fermented foods and beverages.