

Bad Bugs - No Drugs

"Drug resistance develops naturally, but careless practices in drug supply and use are hastening it unnecessarily." - Center for Global Development.

The race is on: Bugs may be a step behind but they're developing fast and new methods of cleaning the areas we live and work in along with the preventive feeding of antibiotics to livestock have increased their ability to adapt exponentially.

Better Health Channel has claimed that "The overuse of antibacterial cleaning products in the home may be producing strains of multi-antibiotic-resistant bacteria."

The fact that the pharmaceutical industry is at risk of losing the battle against the evil bacteria causing infections in us humans was clearly illustrated by presentations at the Swedish American Museum in Chicago September 19.

The Consulate General of Sweden, supported by the Swedish Embassy, had invited prominent researchers and companies from both sides of the Atlantic to an informal gathering at the Museum. The goal: To discuss ways to cooperate in finding solutions to today's infection control problems, particularly bacterias' ever increasing tendency to develop mutations with a resistance to antibiotics.

Sweden has produced some world class innovations in the field and are continuing to break



Dr. Anna Lönnroth Sjödén of the European Commission and Dr. John Rex of Astra Zeneca.

new barriers. Swedish innovators are looking for ways to work with their U.S. counterparts and Big Pharma to find better ways to combat the Bad Bugs. The event was arranged in conjunction with the ICAAC Convention (by American Society of Microbiology) in Chicago September 17-20 and was also sponsored by a long list of Swedish and U.S. institutions.

Prominent speakers were Dr. Anna Lönnroth Sjödén of the European Commission, Dr. Otto Cars of ReAct, the global initiative to combat the problem and Dr. John Rex of Astra Zeneca.

In between short and focused presentations, the 60 or so guests enjoyed Swedish delicacies, including Västerbottensost (matured cheese from Sweden's north) and cloudberry jam tidbits. The informal discussions became lively and a repeat of the initiative is planned for the next ICAAC in San Francisco in 2012.

Submitted by Kerstin Nicholson