The changing role of the chef: A dialogue - DTU Orbit (06/11/2019)

The changing role of the chef: A dialogue

For Gastro-Chef-Science 2018, we were asked to collaborate on a presentation entitled “The new role of the chef in the 21st century,” which would help frame the interactions between scientists and chefs that were at the centre of the program. We each began with a brief introduction to contextualize our perspectives and define what we mean by chefs and their role. The presentation, followed up by a dialogue between the two of us. Anne: an academic who wrote her dissertation in food studies at New York University on the changing role of the chef in the 21st century and has been researching how the profession of the chef has evolved since the 1970s, while also closely working with chefs as a conference organizer, writer, and director of the Experimental Cuisine Collective at NYU. Roberto: Manager of the Skylab FoodLab at the Danish Technical University, former head of R&D of the Nordic Food Lab. Roberto is a long-time chef with background studies in agriculture. Roberto has worked extensively side-by-side with scientists, entrepreneurs and thought leaders to further the application of food-related innovation in a real-world context, encouraging hands-on learning, and building bridges between disciplines by using food as a vehicle to address grand global challenges. The format allowed us to interrogate the other’s approach and gain in the process a fresh outlook on our own work, rather than if we had more unilaterally presented on the topic. This paper replicates that format. What we said then and write here is informed by our own experiences. We hope to open the conversation to others who feel concerned by the questions it poses, so that we can collectively continue to create a growing body of evidence behind the changing role of the chef.

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Contributors: McBride, A. E., Flore, R.
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