

29 August 2013

Press Release

APC Scientists Feature on Dara O’Brain’s BBC Science Club

John Cryan and Paul O’Toole feature in, “Invisible Worlds”, the last of the current series of Dara O’Brain’s Science Club on BBC2 TV on 29th August..

In the programme journalist Alok Jha travels to Cork to meet John and Paul at the APC to shine a light on some of the more mysterious and usually hidden worlds that surround us and to investigate the new and incredible world of the microbiome. He discovers that he’s not only playing host to an entire ecosystem of microbes in his gut but that it’s responsible not just for his health but also for his mental well-being.

One of the key arms of John Cryan's research is focused on understanding the interaction between brain and the microbiota within the gut and how it applies to disorders including depression, anxiety, irritable bowel syndrome, obesity and autism. He was recently awarded the prestigious Utrecht University Excellence in Pharmaceutical Research Award and was named UCC Researcher of the Year in 2012. His research group is funded by Science Foundation Ireland, the Health Research Board, The Irish Research Council and the European Union Seventh Framework Programme.

Paul O’Toole’s research aims to understand bacterial associations with the human gut, and how this impacts on health and disease. Professor O’Toole led the Eldermet study which found that the composition of the gut microbiota can positively and negatively impact the health of older people in our population (see [Nature July 2012](#)). He was able to apply these methods to determine the composition of Alok Jha’s microbiota, and how that reflected what his normal diet is.

**BBC Science Club “Invisible Worlds” Programme** is broadcast on BBC2 TV at 8pm on Thursday 29 August.

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