

Conference: 18th International Congress on Animal Reproduction**Recipient: José Buratini**

I immensely thank SRF for the travel grant that allowed me to participate in the 18th International Congress on Animal Reproduction, from June 26th to 30th, in "Le Vinci in Tours", Tours – France, which significantly contributed for my activities as a researcher in the area of reproductive biology and technology.

With regard to the scientific program, as the leading researcher of the Laboratory of Ovarian Molecular Physiology – Sao Paulo State University, which main focuses are the role of the oocyte and paracrine/autocrine factors in the regulation of cumulus cells differentiation and oocyte developmental competence, and the improvement of oocyte *in vitro* maturation for *in vitro* embryo production, I was particularly benefited from talks on the control of oocyte maturation and metabolism, cumulus cell function, roles of microRNAs in oocyte and embryo development, and regulation of embryo metabolism. These topics were specially explored during the plenary session "Somatic Environment and Oocyte Differentiation" and during the workshops "Oocyte Quality", "MicroRNA in gametes and embryos" and "Embryo Metabolism". The session "Metabolism and Reproduction" and the Symposium "Reproductive Parameters of High Yielding Dairy Cattle" were also very insightful in approaching metabolic and hormonal challenges in dairy cows that must be considered for the development of new strategies for oocyte maturation *in vitro*.

In addition to the information/insights provided by the oral presentations, my PhD student Paula Lima presented the abstract "Fibroblast growth factor 8 delays nuclear maturation and alters expression of *NPPC* in bovine cumulus-oocyte complexes" during the poster session. It was a good opportunity for Paula and I to discuss our data and interact with important scientists in the field.

The ICAR meeting also served as a valuable opportunity of interaction with international collaborators, as well as potential speakers and sponsors for the Annual Meetings of the Brazilian Society for Embryo Technology (SBTE), of which I am president from 2016 to 2017.

Many thanks to SRF again.

Jose Buratini