CARTA Public Symposium

We Are What We Ate: The Diets That Fueled Human Evolution

Friday, October 30, 2026
1:00 - 5:30 PM [Pacific]

Watch via the
Public Symposium Event Page

SCHEDULE

	TIME ZONE			
	PACIFIC [PDT]	CENTRAL (CDT)	EASTERN [EDT]	GMT
WELCOME **Jerry Joyce**, Salk Institute President CARTA Co-Director	1:00-1:05 PM	3:00-3:05 PM	4:00-4:05 PM	8:00-8:05 PM
OPENING REMARKS **Erica Sonnenburg,** Stanford Univ School of Med Event Co-Chair	1:05-1:10 PM	3:05-3:10 PM	4:05-4:10 PM	8:05-8:10 PM
SESSION I: CHAIRED BY ERICA SONNENBURG				
1) THE DIETS OF EARLY HOMININS **Matthew Sponheimer**, Univ of Colorado Boulder	1:10-1:30 PM	3:10-3:30 PM	4:10-4:30 PM	8:10-8:30 PM
2) THE HUMAN PREDATORY PATTERN **Jessica Thompson**, Yale University	1:30-1:50 PM	3:30-3:50 PM	4:30-4:50 PM	8:30-8:50 PM
3) FROM SUGAR TO STARCH: DETECTING DIET SHIFTS DURING HUMAN EVOLUTION **Nathaniel Dominy**, Dartmouth College	1:50-2:10 PM	3:50-4:10 PM	4:50-5:10 PM	8:50-9:10 PM
4) RED MEAT IN ANTHROPOGENY: FROM A BLESSING TO A CURSE? **Ajit Varki**, UC San Diego School of Med	2:10-2:30 PM	4:10-4:30 PM	5:10-5:30 PM	9:10-9:30 PM
5) THE EVOLUTIONARY SIGNIFICANCE OF COOKED FOOD **Rachel Carmody**, Harvard University	2:30-2:50 PM	4:30-4:50 PM	5:30-5:50 PM	9:30-9:50 PM
BREAK	2:50-3:10 PM	4:50-5:10 PM	5:50-6:10 PM	9:50-10:10 PM
SESSION II: CHAIRED BY PASCAL GAGNEUX				
6) ADAPTATION OF THE MICROBIOME TO CHANGING DIETS **Justin Sonnenburg & Erica Sonnenburg,** Stanford University School of Medicine	3:10-3:30 PM	5:10-5:30 PM	6:10-6:30 PM	10:10-10:30 PM
7) FERMENTATION AND HUMAN BRAIN EXPANSION **Erin Hecht**, Harvard University	3:30-3:50 PM	5:30-5:50 PM	6:30-6:50 PM	10:30-10:50 PM
8) HUMAN EVOLUTION, SPIT BY SPIT **Stefan Ruhl**, State Univ of NY at Buffalo	3:50-4:10 PM	5:50-6:10 PM	6:50-7:10 PM	10:50-11:10 PM
9) THE DIETS OF CHILDREN PAST & PRESENT **Lora Iannotti**, Washington University in St. Louis Bursky School of Public Health	4:10-4:30 PM	6:10-6:30 PM	7:10-7:30 PM	11:10-11:30 PM
WRAP-UP **Pascal Gagneux**, UC San Diego Event Co-Chair	4:30-4:35 PM	6:30-6:35 PM	7:30-7:35 PM	11:30-11:35 AM
LIVE Q&A WITH SPEAKERS	4:35-5:25 PM	6:35-5:25 PM	7:35-8:25 PM	11:35P-12:25AM
CLOSING REMARKS **Pascal Gagneux,** UC San Diego CARTA Executive Co-Director	5:25-5:30 PM	7:25-7:30 PM	8:25-8:30 PM	12:25-12:30 AM