



Dr. Sophie NICKLAUS
Scientific Director, “Food and Health”, INRAE, France

Profile

Sophie Nicklaus is a Senior Scientist at INRAE and currently Scientific Director “Food and Health” since October 2025. During her training as an agricultural engineer (AgroParisTech), she became interested in the sensory and nutritional qualities of food and their determinants. She extensively studied sensory properties of foods when she started her academic career at INRA in 1998. Since completing her PhD thesis in food science at the University of Burgundy, she has spent 20 years at the Center for Taste and Feeding Behaviour (Dijon) studying children's eating behavior (food preferences; appetite control) to understand critical periods and factors, using experimental and epidemiological approaches. In particular, she has sought to understand the role of eating behavior (including sensory inputs) as a modulator of the link between food quality and health status. This has led her to collaborate with public health authorities in France to develop and evaluate updated recommendations on infant feeding. In recent years, she has broadened her interests to include the place of food consumers in food systems in order to understand the levers for action for more sustainable diets, notably as scientific director of the “Territoire d'Innovation Dijon Alimentation Durable 2030” project led by the local authority Dijon Metropole. She is the author of more than 150 academic publications in international peer-reviewed journals. Between April 2024 and September 2025, she was Deputy Scientific Director of “Food and Bioeconomy” at INRAE.

In 2018, she was awarded the Danone International Prize on Alimentation. In 2022, she was nominated as “Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur” by a decree of the French President E. Macron; and she was awarded the INRAE Scientific Challenge Prize for her work on children's eating behavior.