



7 April 2015

AIPH Spring Meeting highlights strength in international collaboration

The benefits of international collaboration between industry trade bodies were clear to see at this year's Spring Meeting of the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) held in Paris, France on 18 March. AIPH members from across the world gathered to debate current industry topics and agree collaborative activities.

The meeting was opened with presentations on the ornamentals industry in France from Isabelle Descamps from PromoJardin and Aline Haeringer from Val'hor. According to Ms Descamps, "The French garden market is worth 7.5 billion euro and the market for plants is worth 1.93 billion euro". 2013 was a poor year for sales and 2014 figures are still only flat against 2011. Ms Haeringer introduced the work undertaken by Val'hor to stimulate the plant market in France. This includes campaigns to promote the purchase of flowers, a school garden week and Plante Bleure certification.

During the AIPH Environment & Plant Health Committee members debated the issue of nursery certification following a presentation by the Executive Officer of the Floriculture Sustainability Initiative (FSI), Jeroen Oudheusden. Committee Chairman, Gery Heungens from Belgium, noted that "It was agreed that the drive for certification of plant products is not going away. The need to demonstrate quality, sustainable production has meant that certification standards provide a useful service for the industry and help to embed best practice. Interestingly it was noted that product-level certification is likely to become a bigger issue for the future compared to business-level certification that is most widespread at the moment".

The AIPH Novelty Protection Committee, chaired by Bernard Oosterom from The Netherlands, included a presentation from the President of CPVO (EU Community Plant Variety Office), Martin Ekvad, on how all stakeholders can be included in influencing the EU Plant Variety Rights system. Mr Oosterom commented "AIPH is actively involved in protecting the interests of growers to preserve the important 'growers exemption' that gives growers the ability to breed new plants from any plant material. Excessive protection legislation will effectively stifle innovation in plant breeding and working with organisations like CPVO we will ensure that the voice of growers is properly heard".

The AIPH Green City Committee, chaired by Karen Tambayong from Indonesia, heard from Dominique Douard on the French Cite Verte initiative to green French cities. With an annual budget of 1.4 million euro the programme has developed a Green City Manifesto that it uses to influence local authorities across France to plant more in cities. Ms

Tambayong commented, “AIPH provides a unique forum for sharing Green City activity worldwide, it is great to hear of all that is going on in France. My Committee is working hard to help set standards for green cities and to stimulate a real step change in urban greening”.

The AIPH Marketing & Exhibitions Committee, chaired by Kevin Chung from Chinese Taipei, reviewed progress on upcoming international horticultural exhibitions. Mr Chung commented, “We have so many exciting AIPH approved exhibitions coming up and these present such a great opportunity for the industry to display how special it is”. Exhibitions will take place in Antalya (Turkey) and Tangshan (China) in 2016, Taichung (Chinese Taipei) in 2018, Beijing (China) in 2019 and Almere (Netherlands) in 2022.

Commenting on the meeting, AIPH President Vic Krahn, said “There is no other forum like AIPH for growers around the world to share what they are doing and to learn from each other. I am pleased that AIPH is progressing so many important initiatives that will help growers in their own countries to raise the profile and perception of plants and grow this important market for the benefit of the whole industry and society overall”.

Contacts

Tim Briercliffe, AIPH Secretary General

Email: sg@aiph.org Tel: +44 (0) 118 9308956 Mobile: +44 (0) 7885 750324

Website: www.aiph.org

Follow AIPH on Twitter @AIPHglobal

Notes for Editors:

International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH)

AIPH is a co-ordinating body representing horticultural producers' organisations all over the world. It was set up in Switzerland in 1948 to stimulate the international marketing of flowers, plants and landscaping services. Currently membership consists of 26 organisations from 19 countries. For further details visit www.aiph.org.