



PRESS RELEASE

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Global issues facing ornamental horticultural production debated at AIPH Congress

Over 90 delegates from around the world took part in strategic planning sessions, committees and professional tours during the 65th AIPH Annual Congress held in Niagara Falls, Canada from 8-12 September 2013. Hosted by the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association (CNLA) and Landscape Ontario (LO) delegates were treated to an insight into Canadian horticulture whilst debating the challenges facing growers around the world.

The AIPH Green City Committee heard from many countries on how they are seeking to implement the greening of urban areas. Committee Chair, Ms Karen Tambayong from Indonesia commented “It is clear that this forum provides one of the only places where information on green cities around the world can be collated and shared. We heard from Australia on their 2020 Vision to get 20% more green into the built environment by 2020; we heard from Turkey on their plans for 120 new forest parks; we heard from The Netherlands on their new initiative called ‘iVerde’; we heard about getting young people involved in Indonesia and that there are 112 municipalities and regions in that country listed to be Green Cities; we also heard reports from Japan, Korea and Canada amongst others. We have formed a small working group to define how AIPH can best facilitate this information sharing to help in the generation of more green cities and its knock-on benefits for growers”.

The Green City Committee also heard from Raymond Carrier from Canada’s *Communities in Bloom* and its global equivalent ‘International Challenge’. He called on countries not already involved to put forward cities in bloom for this international prize.

The AIPH Novelty Protection Committee heard from Anthony Parker of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency on their plans to move towards compliance with the 1991 UPOV (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants) Convention covering plant breeders rights to increase protection for Canadian plant breeders. Committee Chair, Mr Bernard Oosterom from The Netherlands commented “It is re-assuring to see a country like Canada taking these issues so seriously. We have major concerns that many countries do not take breeders rights as seriously as they should. We are also worried about the potential for mis-application of criteria defining ‘essentially derived varieties’ and will be expressing our concerns at the next UPOV seminar on this issue in Geneva later in October”.

The AIPH Environment & Plant Health Committee included a debate on the environmental challenges facing growers across the world. CNLA Chief Executive, Victor Santacruz, talked through the challenges for Canadian growers including water quality and conservation, pesticide regulations

and plant health. CNLA have been successful in gaining Government interest in the plight of growers. Initiatives that have emerged include a Horticulture Value Chain Roundtable, a Clean Plants Certification Programme, the Ontario Green Infrastructure Coalition and a National Plastic Recycling event. Committee Chair, Mr Gery Heungens from Belgium commented “The issues raised by CNLA resonated with many in the room. We can learn from each other. Many members have taken ideas from the CNLA presentation and it was also interesting to hear how Australia and Belgium have tackled invasive plants pressures and how Australia has addressed water shortages. European growers are concerned about the effects of the revised EU Plant Health regime and AIPH will continue to put forward these concerns.”

The AIPH Marketing Committee received updates from countries preparing AIPH-approved horticultural exhibitions. AIPH approval is necessary for countries wanting to work through their governments to create truly international garden expositions. Committee Chair, Mr Shinya Wada from Japan commented “It is very satisfying to see a programme of horticultural exhibitions in place well into the 2020’s. The current expo is in Suncheon, Korea; it has attracted millions of visitors raising the profile of horticulture, gardens and gardening within that region of Asia. It is exciting to see the development of expos in China, Turkey and Chinese Taipei coming up soon. I would encourage anyone to pay a visit to these huge celebrations of horticultural excellence”. For a full list of horticultural exhibitions see the AIPH website.

The Committee meetings concluded with the AIPH Council meeting where members confirmed their commitment to the development of a new strategy for the organisation. Members spent a whole day debating this issue and are working towards a new strategy ahead of the AIPH Spring Meeting in April 2014. The members also agreed to the establishment of AIPH as a non-profit association, based in Brussels, giving it formal international recognition. AIPH President, Mr Vic Krahn from Canada commented “This year’s Congress was very important. We have re-focused the organisation and with the help of Tim Briercliffe, our new Secretary General based in the UK, we will be upgrading our level of support to the growers of the world. I believe we now have in place an organisation fit for the future. I would welcome the involvement of even more countries. These are exciting times and I would like everyone to be involved.”

The Congress, which included the gala dinner of the International Grower of the Year awards, concluded with two days of tours of nurseries in the area and the Vineland Research Station.

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Notes for Editors:

International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH)

AIPH is a co-ordinating body representing horticultural producers' organizations 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.